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ARBATOV SAYS SDI DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY ILLUSION

WA201350 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 8, 2 Mar 87 pp 14-15

[Article by Doctor of Historical Sciences Aleksey Arbatov: "The Illusion of an Impenetrable Shield"]

[Text] Many of the advocates of the Strategic Defence Initiative now avoid discussing concrete questions: what type of anti-missile system they are going to build and how effective it is likely to be, how much money and time such a system will take, how to make it invulnerable to countermeasures from the other side, how compatible attempts to speed up the implementation of the SDI programme are with the ABM treaty, what will happen if SDI fails to provide hardware for an anti-missile system and if the ABM treaty and the dialogue on arms limitation in general have by then been irreparably wrecked.

Instead of answering these questions, the proponents of SDI often enter into discourses of a philosophical nature, arguing that the centuries-old history of wars and the art of war has always seen a dialectic between the "shield" and the "sword," defence and attack. This rivalry has proceeded with alternating success: as more powerful weapons were invented, the doctrine of attack prevailed, to be followed inevitably by emphasis on defence, and so forth. For all their monstrous and devastating power, nuclear missiles are not exempt from this dialectical law, the champions of SDI assert.

Invoking historical experience, elementary logic and moral principles impresses public opinion, because many people are naturally unable to perceive the complex military-technical and operational-strategic aspects of the problem on their own. For this reason the defence-attack aspect of the current polemic surrounding SDI merits attention, the more so as devotees of this programme, using plausible scientific arguments, try to prove that weapons will be developed in the future as well.

Offensive or Defensive Weapon [subhead]

Indeed, more often than not, offence and defence have been relative, not absolute, categories. A shield is certainly a classic means of defence. But the conclusion is different if we consider not the weapon as such but how it is used in fighting. The shield and coat of mail were attributes of offensive warfare in the Middle Ages. Artillery had an even more obvious dual purpose: it was a means of defending a fortress, and an offensive weapon to be used in sieges.

Many other instances of the kind could be cited. Cases where the role of a weapon changes depending on tactics and strategy are numerous in history. Engels wrote of the competitive struggle between armour-plating and the guns on battleships, burghers' arquebuses and the armour of the knights. Nuclear arms are no exception to the dialectical laws governing the development of weaponry. But the incessant rivalry between defence and offence has always been manifested in concrete forms.

In the relation of forces between the Soviet Union and the United States, the situation has changed periodically, just as it happened in earlier history. On the technical and tactical plane, attack and defence are competing with each other as regards the destructive power and target accuracy of nuclear weapons, on the one hand, and enhancing their invulnerability to an enemy nuclear strike, on the other. [paragraph continues]

In the latter case, steps are being taken to provide better protection for the silo launchers of land-based missiles, enhance the invulnerability of missiles by deploying mobile launchers, and ensure the secrecy of patrols by missile-carrying submarines in the ocean and the quick takeoff of bombers from airfields.

The nuclear arms of one side are primarily offensive weapons against the peaceful installations of the other. As military theorists concluded long ago, the possibility of annihilating the essential values of a state -- its population, economic potential and administrative bodies -- before, or regardless of, wiping out its military potential has meant a drastic change brought about by nuclear missiles in the art and science of warfare.

In the past, the victor gained access to these values only after the enemy had been defeated. The United States hoped to realize this possibility in the 1940s and 1950s, first by relying on its monopoly of nuclear weapons and subsequently, by taking advantage of its territory being beyond the range of Soviet nuclear missiles.

The dialectical law of "negation of the negation" was also manifested with regard to nuclear strategy. As soon as the Soviet Union developed nuclear weapons and intercontinental carriers, its armed forces acquired the potential to deal a retaliatory blow at vitally important enemy centres, also without engaging the enemy's armed forces.

The traditional situation between the nuclear powers has been restored, but in an entirely new form. Without crushing the armed forces and, in particular, the nuclear armaments, of the other side, its population and economy cannot be subjugated or wiped out, not because they are protected by troops, but because the other side can strike a devastating retaliatory blow at the aggressor.

Given nuclear parity, a successful attack and victory have become impossible unless the aggressor is able to avert a devastating retaliation or reduce its effect to the minimum. In other words, strategic superiority has also become unattainable.

Hence the conclusion that the effectiveness of an attack is now measured by the ability to destroy the nuclear armaments of the other side as well as its combat control and communication system, while the power of defence is measured by the ability of the strategic forces to survive even in a surprise attack and deliver a crushing retaliation. This is the chief defence factor in the relation of the nuclear forces of both sides, where defence appears primarily as the potential deterrence of the likely aggressor from attack, and not as a traditional means of repelling such an attack.

From the late 1940s to the mid-1960s, with the United States' considerable nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, strategic attack obviously prevailed over defence. The United States calculated on destroying the greater part of the Soviet nuclear arsenal in a first strike. This was the reason for the instability in the correlation of military forces and, consequently, for the political tension of those years and the serious danger of nuclear war.

In the latter half of the 1960s, the Soviet Union took measures to build up its strategic potential and, as a result, the military situation began to stabilize. In the 1970s the survivability of nuclear weapons was enhanced in the conditions of approximate parity recorded in the SALT-1 and SALT-2 treaties. [paragraph continues]

This increased the ability of the two powers to deliver a retaliatory blow, and strengthened the factor of mutual deterrence.

There were negative factors as well. The increased numbers of nuclear warheads, the development of new weapon systems, and the appearance of destabilizing concepts (of a "limited nuclear war," for instance) adversely affected the nuclear balance. Remaining basically offensive in technical and operational terms, the nuclear armaments of both powers formed an overall strategic balance of forces between the late 1960s and early 1980s in which defence (that is, the reliability of the retaliatory potential) evidently predominated over attack. A substantial growth in the stability of strategic parity could be viewed as a factor for deterrence.

Trying to Upset Parity [subhead]

Another tendency has become manifest in the mid-1980s. The new systems MX, Trident-2 and Midgetman, B-1B and cruise missiles of different types will enable the United States to treble by the mid-1990s, as compared with the early 1980s, its potential to destroy the other side's protected ground objectives, while the proportion of U.S. nuclear missiles that can be fired from concealed positions and reach their targets within 30 minutes will have risen 20-fold.

Given the present strategic alignment of forces, these programmes will not of course give Washington the capacity to deal an annihilating first strike. The countermeasures taken by the Soviet Union will certainly provide for the greater combat power, survivability and effectiveness of its strategic forces and the maintenance of its defence might at the proper level. However, the absolute and relative growth, in the overall military balance, of the proportion of weapons that can deliver an annihilating strike and become increasingly vulnerable to such a strike is unquestionably a destabilizing tendency. It means a relative strengthening of attack to the detriment of defence. For instance, the strategic doctrine of the Reagan administration lays emphasis on "limited and protracted nuclear war," a "preemptive" and "encounter" strike (strike on warning) and a "decapitating" strike. If this trend continues, strategic parity as a factor in military-political deterrence will gradually lose its effectiveness.

As for the defence-offence dynamics of the military balance, the mechanical application of previous manifestations of this process (which, incidentally, never assumed absolute or unambiguous forms in the past either) in the entirely new military-political situation is inadmissible. Weapons, defensive in the technical and operational sense (for instance, many types of anti-missile systems in combination with offensive nuclear weapons), could become a component of attack to a much greater extent than, for example, tanks.

The possibility of developing absolutely reliable means of protecting the population from nuclear weapons, especially from ballistic missiles, is to be ruled out even theoretically. Not a single weapon system or piece of equipment can be one hundred per cent reliable and effective. Furthermore, the destructive power of even the few nuclear warheads that could penetrate the ABM system under any circumstances makes the impotence of defence in protecting the population more evident than ever before. With less than one hundred per cent effectiveness, a sophisticated and extremely costly ABM system with space-based elements for protecting the administrative and industrial centres would be quite useless in repulsing a first massive nuclear strike at these objectives.

At the same time, even a partially effective anti-missile system of this type can greatly destabilize the strategic balance. It may create a highly dangerous illusion that a less powerful retaliatory strike from the other side, after it has been weakened and disorganized by a surprise nuclear attack on its strategic forces, can be repulsed. The potential of attack (first strike) will gain superiority over defence (retaliatory strike). Moreover, if the potentials of both sides are symmetrical, an asymmetrical response is especially necessary to SDI. Such a response should counter the space-based ABM system with a view to enhancing retaliatory capacity, stability and deterrence.

Thus, the dialectics of the nuclear-missile balance throw new light on both offensive and defensive armaments and radically change their traditional role in the ratio of offence and defence. It is this circumstance that is being deliberately or inadvertently ignored by advocates of SDI.

The genuine dialectics of the nuclear and space age call for a new approach to the problem of defence potential and stability. Without large-scale ABM systems, the balance of offensive nuclear forces is the more stable, the less the ability to weaken retaliatory power with a first strike, and the more reliable the deterrent ability of each state to make an adequate retaliatory strike.

Since the security of the Soviet Union and the United States in the nuclear age can only be mutual, stability implies an overall balance of the forces of both powers and a symmetrical, mutual confidence in the reliability of their deterrent potentials at, incidentally, the lowest possible level of these deadly arsenals, with their reduction to the minimum reasonable sufficiency and, ultimately, the complete abolition of strategic potential and nuclear weapons.

CHERNYSHEV REFLECTS ON HISTORY OF SDI PROGRAM

LD220053 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2122 GMT 21 Mar 87

["Washington's 'Star Nuclear' Madness" -- commentary by TASS military affairs observer Vladimir Chernyshev]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS) -- Four years ago, on 23 March 1983, U.S. President Ronald Reagan made the well-known dismal speech which subsequently was labeled "Star Wars" all over the world. Thus was the official beginning of the SDI program in the United States, which became the main focus of President R. Reagan. Its proclamation was dependent on the following circumstances and considerations.

First, dreaming of world hegemony and striving to ensure for themselves positions of strategic superiority, U.S. ruling circles went the way of comprehensively accumulating arms in all conceivable directions. The logical continuation of this policy was the desire to use space for siting U.S. strike weapons and to turn near-earth space into a potential theater of war.

Second, preparatory work for the militarization of space, already carried out over many years in the United States, reached the stage, according to the calculations of official Washington, in which it was possible to expect practical results.

Third, despite the feverish tempo of creating more and more new types and weapons systems in the United States, the Soviet Union has been reestablishing military-strategic parity, depriving the United States of the opportunity to use the military might it has accumulated in order to attain its global aims. The U.S. administration decided to make the next breakthrough, this time through space.

Fourth, the idea of creating [sozdaniye] space strike weapons was the continuation of the Republican administration's military policy in a further respect as well: U.S. weapons getting geographically closer to the borders of the Soviet Union. Space strike weapons do indeed "answer to" such a goal: they can be "suspended" in space, so that they present a continuous threat to Soviet territory.

Fifth, Washington considered it to be more expedient to continue to push ahead with military programs under the cloak of declamations about the need to strengthen "defense." The idea of including outer space in the strategic confrontation with the Soviet Union, which had been under discussion for several years, itself came into play again under this rubric. The SDI program is now being implemented at full speed. The Pentagon strategists are counting on inflicting with impunity the first nuclear strike on the Soviet Union, with the help of space-based strike strategic forces, and on simultaneously making the USSR incapable of a retaliatory strike.

Illusory hopes of victory in a nuclear war and of establishing world domination -- such is the "philosophy" of the Washington strategists.

The SDI program has already become the chief obstacle on the way to a nuclear-free world. It threatens the entire international legal system in the sphere of arms limitation and reduction, and of strengthening security. If it is implemented, everything that has been created over decades could be erased forever. The SDI program cancels out the ABM treaty, deprives it of meaning, and thereby destroys the mechanism for holding back the nuclear arms race. It is becoming a powerful catalyst in this race in all aspects, undermining general security.

Today, 4 years later, the evaluation of the SDI given by the Soviet leadership on 27 March 1983 is wholly justified: the present U.S. administration is continuing to proceed along an extremely dangerous path, and is devising more and more new variants of how best to unleash nuclear war in the hope of winning it. This enterprise is not only irresponsible; it is also mad.

KASHLEV INTERVIEW ON CSCE PROGRESS IN VIENNA

WA201352 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 8, 2 Mar 87 pp 12-13

[NEW TIMES correspondent Anatoliy Kovrigin interview with Yuriy Kashlev, chief Soviet delegate to the CSCE meeting in Vienna: "The Inertia of the Bloc Mentality. How [To] Overcome It?"]

[Text] [Kovrigin] The Vienna meeting of representatives of the states participating in the CSCE has entered a new stage: after the general discussion, debates have started on proposals from delegates on every aspect of the European process. But before turning to these proposals, what would you say about what has been achieved so far?

[Kashlev] The first stage of the Vienna meeting opened on November 4, 1986, at the level of the foreign ministers of the 35 participating countries. After the ministers left, the work continued till late December. The question under consideration at the time was the progress achieved in implementing the Helsinki Final Act and the concluding document of the Madrid meeting. The exchanges of views forcefully illustrated the conflicting approaches to the issues under consideration. Some countries tried to talk to their counterparts as equals, as befits sovereign states. They provided information on what had been done and was being done inside their territories to implement the Helsinki accords, made constructive proposals and, when warranted, criticized. Others adopted the stance of prosecuting attorneys, talking only of the situation in other countries, while keeping silent about their own domestic situations, laying emphasis on circumstantial matters and avoiding the discussion of essentials and this, moreover, in a pointedly confrontational manner.

[Kovrigin] Which countries specifically took such a stand?

[Kashlev] The lead was taken by the U.S. delegation. Their closest NATO allies, the Canadians and the British, did their best to keep in step. Those delegations made a point of attacking socialist countries and tried to cast aspersions on their policies with regard to human rights and people-to-people contacts.

[Kovrigin] What forms did those attempts take in practice?

[Kashlev] The speech of the chief American delegate Warren Zimmerman at the first plenary session after the resumption of the meeting on January 27 is a case in point. He made about 20 negative references to the U.S.S.R. in his lengthy discourses, apparently forgetting that he represented a country in which the rights of tens of millions are suppressed and not a few people are kept in prison for political motives.

We have never heard anything either from the U.S. or any other Western CSCE country about measures to reduce their huge army of unemployed, which totals about 30 million. Surely this figure is not comparable with some 30 dissidents in a country or even 3,000 or so wishing to emigrate. The figure, I repeat, is 30 million. Neither have we heard of any plans to alleviate the plight of the millions of homeless in the West. And this is something we would like to hear about as the United Nations has proclaimed 1987 the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

[Kovrigin] Unemployment, poverty and homelessness are the most glaring but not the only violations of human rights in the West, aren't they?

[Kashlev] No, they are not. There are cases -- well known to the international public -- of the murder of human rights activists, the dispersal of large demonstrations of young people and students and encroachments on the freedom of the press. Last year alone the European Commission of Human Rights in Strasbourg received more than 700 complaints concerning actions by the governments of Britain, the F.R.G., France and other West European countries. Many of these complaints were passed on to the International Court of Justice. What is the fate of these complaints about violations of human rights? Alas, the West would not give straight answers to such questions.

[Kovrigin] And what is the situation in Vienna with regard to questions that affect the destiny not only of the Europeans but of the whole of humanity? I mean the strengthening of security and real disarmament.

[Kashlev] Debates on military and political issues show that most of the participants in the meeting are unanimous: Vienna could make a tangible contribution to the improvement of the political climate in Europe and pave the way for talks on major reductions in the armed forces and conventional armaments from the Atlantic to the Urals. Today on the negotiating table of the Vienna meeting there is only one explicit proposal for strengthening European security. It is Poland's initiative to the effect that the mandate of the Stockholm conference be extended in such a way that it should consider at the next round both confidence-building measures in the military sphere and real reductions in armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe. The Polish proposal, put on record as document No. 1 of the Vienna meeting, proceeds from the stand of the Warsaw Treaty states agreed upon at their Budapest meeting. It also takes account of the interest shown by the West European countries in reducing armed confrontation on our continent. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries view Poland's proposal as a major constructive initiative to facilitate an effective transition from the individual confidence-building measures approved in Stockholm to a comprehensive system of trust and real disarmament.

[Kovrigin] Could you clarify that is meant by real disarmament?

[Kashlev] The Warsaw Treaty countries put forward in their Budapest appeal a detailed stage-by-stage programme for reductions in armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe. It provides, as a first step, for simultaneous mutual reductions in the troop strength of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization by 100,000-150,000 for each side within the space of one or two years. Then, in the early 1990s, the parties could further reduce their land forces and tactical air force by 25 per cent from the current level. The socialist countries suggest that these measures be accompanied by measures that would obviate fears of the balance being upset. Agreements could even be reached on thinning out the forces along the line of contact of the two military and political alliances in Europe and on restricting major military exercises.

[Kovrigin] And what about verification? The West has always made a point of it.

[Kashlev] The reduction could be carried out under effective control, with the use of both national technical means and international procedures including on-site inspections. I want to draw your attention to the fact that we suggest, along with the verification of agreed reductions, monitoring the military activity of the remaining forces.

[Kovrigin] So the proposal is, as you have said, to discuss all this simultaneously with the confidence-building measures already agreed on during the first round of the Stockholm conference?

[Kashlev] Precisely. A number of confidence-building measures were agreed on during the first round. It was an exceptionally important accord, which was appreciated by virtually all the participants in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The question of confidence-building measures, however, has not been closed and, in our view, should be resumed in the second round. The Soviet Union, for instance, would like to suggest such items for discussion as notification of independent air force or naval exercises, restrictions on the scale of military exercises, and the extension of confidence-building measures to the territories of all the CSCE countries. Other countries may put forward for discussion some other new confidence-building measures in the military field. [paragraph continues]

It is essential, however, that discussion should not be an end in itself and push the problem of real reductions in the armed forces in Europe into the background and that both sets of proposals should be discussed simultaneously, which is the essence of the Polish proposal.

[Kovrigin] Even people not well versed in military problems will realize that the Polish proposal, supported by all the socialist countries, is giving the go-ahead to the second round of the Stockholm Conference. And what is the attitude of the other participants in the Vienna meeting to this initiative?

[Kashlev] Delegates from a number of neutral and non-aligned countries, such as Yugoslavia, Sweden and Finland, commend the flexibility of Poland's approach. As for the NATO countries, they still avoid giving a straightforward reply to the constructive proposal of the Polish People's Republic.

[Kovrigin] In what way is the Polish initiative related to press reports on possible consultations on disarmament between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization?

[Kashlev] We think the problem of reducing armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe should be considered in an all-European context with the participation of all 35 CSCE states. This is our basic position. However, it does not exclude that, in order to expedite the transition to the concrete examination of disarmament issues, we would take part in work in any form, including unofficial contacts, both bilateral and multilateral.

[Kovrigin] Trade and economic relations have an important role to play in building confidence in Europe. Indeed, they are the fabric of political stability. What should we expect from the Vienna meeting in the economic, scientific and technological spheres?

[Kashlev] Debates on this category of questions are in the main proceeding in a positive spirit. Leaving aside the pointedly confrontational address by the American delegation, the discussion on the "second basket" indicates the Europeans' interest in the continuation and expansion of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation. A number of ideas and proposals for a follow-up to the Vienna meeting have been put forward. I have in mind especially the proposal by Czechoslovakia, in conjunction with Poland, Hungary and the G.D.R., for the convocation of an economic forum, and Bulgaria's idea of holding an ecological forum. The former could discuss trade and industrial cooperation, including problems in which Western delegates displayed keen interest, such as marketing and the participation of small and medium-sized companies in international cooperation. The latter forum should draft environmental protection measures, a matter of growing interest among the European nations.

Other fruitful ideas were voiced. Romania, for instance, proposed a conference on scientific and technological cooperation, the Nordic countries and Austria came up with proposals on some aspects of environmental protection, the Federal Republic of Germany called for an economic conference, Italy for a meeting of scientists from the CSCE countries, and so on.

[Kovrigin] What you are saying suggests that the issues in the "second basket" hold out greater promise of accords. Is this so?

[Kashlev] It will take strenuous efforts to achieve success. We are aware, of course, that far from all the participants in the meeting are prepared to accept major innovative decisions in the field of businesslike cooperation. The habit of linking progress on the "second basket" to advances in other fields -- human rights, for instance -- still persists. This approach does not, of course, contribute to the formulation of mutually acceptable accords.

But we are optimists and believe that common European interests and the mutual dependence and complementary character of the economies of East and West will eventually emerge as the dominant factors and help overcome the inertia and stereotypes of block mentality.

[Kovrigin] You have already mentioned human rights. How is the discussion proceeding on other international legal aspects of humanitarian cooperation? What do the delegates think about the Soviet Union's proposal to discuss these issues at an international conference in Moscow?

[Kashlev] To begin with, I should like to note the unprecedented breadth and significance of the Soviet proposal. It reflects the processes of reorganization at work in our domestic life and our readiness to contribute to the demcoratization of international humanitarian relations. Addressing the opening sitting of the Vienna meeting, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze clearly defined the concept of a Moscow conference, namely, to discuss comprehensively and with a view to a practical solution the entire complex of humanitarian problems in order to improve the situation in this field. The problems are many, enough for the Vienna meeting, a Moscow conference and other CSCE forums.

As for responses to our proposal, for a while some Western delegates seemed stunned. Now they have recovered and are trying to obstruct the Soviet initiative by imposing preconditions. But responsible politicians realize that the time for a representative conference on humanitarian cooperation has come. The Soviet Union says: every condition will be provided in Moscow for its work. We are not afraid of criticism, nor will we keep silent about problems that are of concern to us. In any case, we made a proposal that is clear and unambiguous in both form and substance and we hope it will be supported by all who have an interest in broader humanitarian cooperation.

[Kovrigin] Thank you.

Vienna

ARBATOV WRITES ON DISARMAMENT IN OSLO DAILY

PM240927 Oslo ARBEIDERBLADET in Norwegian 19 Mar 87 p 4

[Georgiy Arbatov "Searchlight" article: "Misconceptions Which Block The Way"]

[Text] In Reykjavik the door to a nuclear-free future was opened a little. But after taking a look through this door, many Western politicians -- not only Americans, but Europeans too -- have turned back terrified.

Where do we find the real motives behind such behavior? In the case of some it is simply a matter of common hypocrisy. With others, there are endeavors to undermine any possible progress along the road to arms limitation and real disarmament. It is important to note that in many cases the reason lies more in erroneous ideas, often honestly held, which in the West are shared not only by politicians but also by a large section of the general public.

Here is one such erroneous idea: The monstrous destructive power of nuclear arms is such that it follows almost automatically that they cannot possibly be used. And what is more, nuclear arms, which make the superpowers more cautious, also help to avert local conflicts in which conventional weapons would be used. If this is the case, nuclear arms do not work for ill, but for the good of mankind. It is supposedly thanks to them that people have lived for 40 years without world wars...

It is impossible to prove this assertion in practice. But it is possible to imagine that the fear of terrible annihilation has played a certain role. However, this gives us no reason to have faith in such anxiety as a reliable and eternal guarantee of peace. That would be the same as ascribing to all governments, statesmen, and politicians the ability to behave extremely rationally, even the possession of clairvoyance powers. That is something that has been characteristic of very few of them -- in the nuclear age too. It is difficult to explain in any other way the many wars, international crises, and other social upheavals which have abounded in the 20th century.

As a historian, I ought rather to take this opportunity to say that the fact that a nuclear war has been avoided for 40 years is due not so much to the wisdom of governments as to public opposition to their actions, and, from time to time, simply to accidents.

Let us for a moment imagine that during the Caribbean crisis in 1962 there had been a serious breakdown in communications, a fatal mistake on the part of one of the leaders, or some serious internal upset or other (something, for example, like the assassination of President Kennedy which took place a year later). Would there then have been a guarantee that the catastrophe would have been avoided? Can we count at all on luck as a guarantee?

In the final analysis, the problem does not lie in finding the reason why it has been possible to live without a major war for the last 40 years. The main thing -- and what worries us today -- is this: How can we live without a nuclear war for the next 40 years, and the 40-year periods after that? Taking as one's point of departure the fact that such a catastrophe has not happened in the past is absurd. We must assume that the threat of an "accidental" nuclear war will increase if nothing changes in the world because of the large quantities of nuclear arms, and because of their new capabilities, which reduce the time for making the most crucial decisions in mankind's history. For this reason a growing burden of responsibility is being transferred to machines and mechanisms. But these are imperfect, no matter how thoroughly they are checked.

Such is the tragic dilemma of our time. Mankind is living under conditions in which the mechanism for starting a nuclear war is fully developed. A malfunctioning computer, a military person who makes a mistake, or a politician who loses control of himself could set the whole thing in motion. For this reason -- even if you think that nuclear arms and the fear of them could have played a decisive role in the avoidance of a catastrophic war so far -- it is impossible to count on the situation remaining the same in the future. We need other, more reliable guarantees.

The Soviet Union has put forward proposals for the total elimination of nuclear arms and views such a step as the first part of an overall plan to secure world peace and security. In Mikhail Gorbachev's 15 January 1986 statement, which contained a proposed program for the abolition of nuclear arms by the year 2000, it was assumed that disarmament would also spread to other areas. This is natural. The Soviet Union has proposed putting an end to nuclear arms not simply to "move" the arms race into other fields -- chemical or conventional weapons, for example.

In the Soviet Union, which survived the horrors of World War II, which was a "conventional" war according to all modern norms, people are able to imagine better than in any other state what threat is also true of the rest of Europe, which has also true of the rest of Europe, which has also lived through two world wars. And outside the European continent a major "conventional" war is hardly likely. In Europe, people are coming to an ever clearer realization that "conventional" war is just as appalling as a nuclear war. Especially as there are in Europe over 150 Chernobyl-sized nuclear reactors, large numbers of chemical companies, stockpiles of oil products, and buried toxic waste -- things that mean that even an "ordinary" war would amount to the total destruction of modern society.

The Soviet Union sees an agreement for the abolition of nuclear arms as a major and -- without wishing to exaggerate -- an excellent step toward disarmanent and demilitaization at all levels. Without waiting for such an agreement, the Soviet Union, together with its Warsaw Pact allies, has put forward more far-reaching proposals for conventional arms limitation.

Nuclear arms are not only a new type of weapon. They have brought the most important internal contradictions of militarism to the final limit by demonstrating clearly that war has lost all political meaning and justification. Because these weapons can lead to -- or more correctly, cannot avoid leading to -- the destruction of mankind. These weapons have brought us, as have many hundreds of years of militarism, of armies, and of military equipment, to an outer limit. Mankind will not be able to stay there for long. It could either throw mankind into the nuclear abyss or open up the road to real disarmament.

NUCLEAR ARMS GROUP CONTINUES GENEVA MEETINGS

LD200915 Moscow TASS in English 0900 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Geneva March 20 TASS -- A number of meetings took place in Geneva this week in the framework of the group on medium-range nuclear arms.

Under an understanding reached after the completion of the 7th round of Soviet-American talks on nuclear and space arms, the group is continuing its work to hammer out a treaty on medium-range missiles.

SOVIET WRITER QUESTIONS NUCLEAR RETALIATION

PM111527 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English NO. 10, 89 Mar 87 p 7

[Article by Ales Adamovich under the rubrich "'MN' [MOSCOW NEWS] Discussion Club": "At the Forum and After"]

[Excerpt] If the question "whose side are you on?" had been put to those at the Moscow International Forum, the answer would have been "on the side of humanity." "What do

you oppose?" "We oppose the Bomb". They would have upheld general human values. In the face of global problems and perils, the prevailing atmosphere was that of mutual respect and self-respect, and it would have been a torture for use there to hear speeches and arguments regarded customary only yesterday.

As we were starting a round-table discussion on the new mode of thinking, a West European participant got up, visibly nervous, and suggested that a human rights committee be formed before the Forum got underway. I don't know which reaction he had expected, but Aytmatov and Klimov who were presiding swiftly responded by saying: "OK, could you take the trouble to make up such a committee, work out proposals and bring them to the meeting's notice?" "Me?" "Yes, that's right?"

Finally it was recognized that all of us have problems in this field and that we have at least been solving our own problems by moving towards a comprehensive democratization of society not just by talking about human rights in inverted commas and call them "so-called" as journalists did rather foolishly in the past. It's only proper that human rights should exist, be expanded and protected.

The new mode of thinking is not simply new logic. It is new morals, new perception and new literature. This is what I was eager to discuss thoroughly at the Forum and would like to discuss here in this article.

The new mode of thinking can be fearful. It's no simple thing to ponder over things suggested by the age of nuclear weapons.

I once happened to talk with a commander of a modern submarine.

"It must make you somewhat uneasy to know what cosmic might you can wield."

He said: "If such a thing exists, someone has to control it. You've only got to keep back unnecessary thoughts."

"But let's imagine," I hurried on to find out all at once, "that those whose doctrine regards the first strike conceivable have done just that. Or there is an accident, an error and half the world goes up in flames, would you respond or not?"

The women at the table responded right away:

"You would, of course. Look, they didn't spare us!"

These hurried voices came from the past war, the prenuclear one.

The submarine commander was silent. Then he asked me:

"Would you press the button?"

"No, I wouldn't." The destroyers of humankind would then have finished it off using my retaliatory strike.

I also said upon reflection that retribution would surely catch up with them without a retaliatory strike in the shape of the deadly radiation from their own warheads and the bombed nuclear reactors.

"I have no comment," said the naval officer. "No one, especially they, should know what I'd do."

No, we don't want any part in murdering humankind. We refuse to deliver either the first or the second strike, or any other because we are for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. We are ready to gladly part with nuclear "might", we aren't happy in the least about the cancerous pseudo-biceps, we are not holding on to the status of a nuclear power -- all of our proposals, moratoriums, our practical steps to meet the other side halfway tell their own story.

Surely, the new mode of thinking does not consist of mental exercise. It takes courage.

It takes courage for a military man to admit the insanity, absurdity and brutality of the very "business" of war, to run down as it were their profession. For me there are no military [men] more courageous and worthier than those who, like many retired generals, give their military expertise to the antiwar movement. [passage omitted]

UN COMMITTEE DISCUSSES DEVELOPING SPACE LAW

LD171839 Moscow TASS in English 1830 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] New York March 17 TASS -- A general debate started today at a session of the legal subcommittee of the U.S. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Centres round the issue of the further development of space law in the interests of peaceful cooperation in outer space and the consolidation of peace and social and economic progress of all nations.

The Soviet Union attached great importance to putting an obstacle in the way of space militarization before that process became irreversible, before weapons were deployed in outer space and an unpredictable breakthrough was made in the space arms race, said the Soviet Representative, A.S. Piradov.

He came out in favour of the further consolidation of law and order in outer space with the progressive development of international space law with a view to upholding peace, stability and security.

CORRECTION: KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ON ABM TREATY

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "KRASNAYA ZVEZDA Hits U.S. on ABM Treaty," published in the 12 March Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page AA 4, last paragraph, line two:

...strike weapons and placing [razmeshcheniye] them in space... (changing word "deploying" to "placing" and supplying the vernacular)

'INTERNATIONAL SITUATION: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS'

LD210012 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1715 GMT 20 Mar 87

["International Situation: Questions and Answers" program, presented by international commentator Sergey Pravdin, with international journalists Sergey Losev, Aleksandr Lyutyy, Vitaliy Sobolev, Vyacheslav Lavrentyev, Igor Surguchev, and Vasiliy Lesovik]

[Excerpt] [Pravdin] With us today is Sergey Andreyevich Losev, director general of TASS. The first of the radio listeners' questions touches on reaction abroad to the restructuring being carried out in our country. What is the attitude to it, let's say, in Washington?

[Losev] There are various attitudes to it. The unceasing stream of foreign responses to the results of the CPSU Central Committee January Plenum is convincing evidence of the interest of the public and the press in the West to the restructuring taking place in our country. The decisions of the plenum obliged many Western observers -- including those who are by no means favorably inclined toward us -- to look more soberly at the program for the transformation of Soviet society, to acknowledge the grandiose scale of the changes now taking place in the Soviet Union, and even to call those changes revolutionary. At the same time, Western propaganda is not devoid of malevolence; it would be strange if it were otherwise; we did not expect anything different from our class enemy.

Some Western politicians are attempting to portray the process of democratization which is underway in our country as some kind of reaction to the West's demands concerning the so-called liberalization of Soviet society, as a concession to pressure from outside, as forced steps being taken under pressure. What can one say on that score? There is nothing more absurd than those claims. All our work concerned with revitalizing Soviet society is dictated by its vital needs, the logic of internal development, and not by a desire to please or to appeal to someone. The development of socialist democracy is an organic part of the present Soviet way of life. After all, it is precisely socialism which offers real, not imaginary, guarantees of the genuine rights and freedoms of man. Socialist democracy is the direct opposite of the dictatorship of political capital, covered up by a specious playing at democracy.

As far as the reaction of the present U.S. Administration to the revolutionary transformations in the Soviet Union is concerned, the responses are at times acquiring a simply panic-stricken character in official Washington. This is what Charles Wick, director of the U.S. Information Agency, for example, stated on 13 March: In the eyes of all the world Moscow is propagandizing the new image of an open policy. They are calling that product openess [glasnost]. But openness is not simply a product. The Soviets are trying to score a victory. If they win that will mean they have won in the war of open diplomacy. What will the United States lose in that case? We may lose our security, Wick says with assurance. In the long-term, if we lose the war of ideas we may jeopardize the spirit of the free world, its present life, and the prospect of future security. The Soviets are propagandizing the conditions in the world. They have conquered the attention of the world's population, Wick complains. Their strategic aim is to inform world public opinion, turning it toward the Soviet mind, and to excert pressure, especially on the governments of Western European countries, Japan, and the United States, in order to induce them to adopt positions favorable to Soviet interests, the director of the USIA concluded.

[Pravdin] But don't these statements by the head of the main U.S. propaganda mouthpiece seem absurd, and even wild?

[Losev] Indeed. For a Soviet person they sound absurd. After all, in actual fact the program for the acceleration of the socioeconomic development of our country presents no threat to anyone. It is aimed at improving the life of our people, and is being supplemented by a constructive and all-embracing program of disarmament, the strengthening of peace and international security. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the American ruling classes perceive a threat to imperialist interests in restructuring. Officials in the present Reagan administration are frightened by the infectious force of the Soviet example for the rest of the world. They are alarmed by the fact that the traditional stereotypes created by anti-Soviets are collapsing, such as the Soviet military threat, the iron curtain, suppression of freedom of opinion, violation of human rights in socialist countries, and so on and so forth.

The present U.S. Administration is more and more determinedly adopting a course toward wrecking restructuring in our country, though, to put it bluntly, they're not up to it. In an interview for THE LOS ANGELES TIMES on 15 March, Henry Kissinger, the former U.S. secretary of state, stated: Americans are usually inclined to think that if your opponent gets stronger the opportunities for peace will increase. I should say that if Gorbachev succeeds in his domestic program he will become a more threatening adversary. In actual fact that is a paradox. The Soviet reform program may turn out to be a bigger threat to us.

As they say, you can't put it any clearer or more cynically than that. But from that trend in U.S. policy against our plans the Soviet people can draw only one conclusion: We must certainly achieve success in restructuring, and carry it through to the end. We have simply no other option. As Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev emphasized in his speech at the 18th AUCCTU Congress, now, when the opponent's calculation as to our backwardness has been seriously shaken, imperialism is transferring the stress to a different area -- preventing our plans for transformation from being implemented, hampering them, slowing them down, wrecking them by an arms race. For that purpose they are going to maintain international tension with all their might and preserve the conditions in the world enabling them to portray the USSR, as before, as the cause of all evil and misfortune.

[Pravdin] One forms the impression that somebody or other in the U.S. Administration is attempting to portray even the Soviet Union's latest proposal on the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe as virtually a trap for Ronald Reagan, is that not so?

[Losev] It is incredible, but it is a fact. That is precisely the way it is. Extreme right-wing circles in the United States are now warning the President in all manner of ways about certain dangers in an agreement with the USSR on medium-range missiles. THE WASHINGTON POST even gave space to an article headed: Gorbachev's Proposal Is a Cunning Trap. And that is being said about a fair proposal by the Soviet Union to separate the problem of medium-range missiles in Europe from the package of issues, and to conclude a separate agreement on it, and, moreover, to do this without delay. There is simply not a basis for such a step, but there is virtually an accord drawn up. It was agreed in Reykjavik that over the next 5 years the USSR and the United States would eliminate all their medium-range missiles in Europe. In the same period, the quantity of Soviet missiles of that class would be reduced in the Asiatic part of our country to 100 warheads, on the understanding that the United States could leave the same number of warheads on medium-range missiles on its national territory.

As soon as an agreement on the elimination of Soviet and U.S. medium-range missiles in Europe is signed, the USSR will withdraw from the GDR and Czechoslovakia, with the agreement of the governments of those countries, the enhanced-range operational-tactical missiles that were sited [razmeshcheny] there in response to the deployment [razvertyvaniye] of Pershing-2's and cruise missiles in Western Europe.

As far as other operational-tactical missiles are concerned, we are ready, immediately after the signing of an agrement on medium-range missiles, to get down to talks aimed at the reduction and complete elimination of them. It must be said that the overwhelming majority of the governments of the countries of the world regarded the Soviet initiative as a real opportunity for giving dynamism to the whole process of limiting and reducing arms. The Soviet delegation at the talks on nuclear and space weapons in Geneva received the clear directive to vigorously set about drawing up a concrete agreement in the shortest possible time, on the complete elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe. Naturally, we expect the same constructive approach from the U.S. side, too.

[Pravdin] What is the real situation?

[Losev] As is known, President Reagan publicly welcomed the Soviet proposal on medium-range missiles and announced that Washington was introducing a draft of the corresponding treaty in Geneva, based on the formula agreed in Reykjavik. At the same time, in verbally expressing satisfaction at the fact that the Soviet Union is now proposing that the problem of medium-range missiles be separated from the overall package at the talks, U.S. officials are slipping in a new NATO package, which would include the problem of conventional arms and armed forces, chemical weapons, and would make the elimination of medium-range missiles dependent on an accord on short-range missiles in Europe. The most unbridled militarist circles in the administration are striving to pile up new barriers on the path to an agreement on the elimination of medium-range missiles.

Caspar Weinberger, the Pentagon boss, is openly demanding that the U.S. side should move away from the Reykjavik accords. In that regard, the prominent observer James Reston, in an article entitled Reagan's Last Chance, expresses the view that it would be useful if Ronald Reagan settled the argument about his government through nuclear arms control. The President has taken the first steps by welcoming the proposal of Mikhail Gorbachev, Reston writes. Now a new approach to Congress is needed, too -- Congress is to ratify the future agreement.

[Pravdin] Are the Soviet initiatives having a tangible influence on the mood of the American public?

[Losev] Of course, the iceberg has started to move, and it will gain momentum. In March the influential U.S. public organization The Council on International Relations, in cooperation with the Gallup Institute, carried out a public opinion survey in the United States. Still in thrall to official propaganda, many of the Americans questioned expressed agreement in principle with the present high level of U.S. military expenditure. However, at the same time the overwhelming majority of those questioned rejected the aggressive methods of conducting U.S. foreign policy, which are being used by the Reagan administration. Those questioned are against armed intervention abroad, against the doctrine of neoglobalism, against secret subversive operations abroad, and against financing counterrevolutionary groups in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua and other countries.

Fifty-two percent of Americans are against discriminatory legislation on limitations on trade with our country; 78 percent welcome an expansion in cultural and scientific exchanges between our two states; finally, 80 percent of Americans spoke in favor of the achievements as soon as possible of an agreement in the field of arms control.

[Pravdin] As is known, at the moment Soviet-U.S. consultations are taking place in Moscow on the issue of settling regional conflicts. What can be said on that score?

[Losev] Yes, a Soviet-U.S. exchange of views is taking place in Moscow on regional problems. On the U.S. side, Armacost, U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, is participating in them. The Soviet Union consistently comes out in favor of the elimination of the existing centers of international tension in the world, and the prevention of the emergence of new foci of the danger of war and conflicts. After all, to a substantial degree, both the possibility of maintaining peace on the planet and the prospect of disarmament depend on the settlement of regional conflicts.

The situation in Central America and the threatening situation in the Middle East now are causing particular apprehension. The Arab-Israeli conflict is intertwined with the bloody Iran-Iraq war, which has now been going on for 7 years.

The Soviet Union insists on the convocation of an international conference on the Middle East for the achievement of a fair settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and with the participation of all interested parties. The Reagan administration is hindering that in many different ways. The USSR is in favor of the quickest possible end to the bloody, senseless war between Iran and Iraq. Washington is verbally in favor of that, too. But in practice, together with Israel, it is assisting the fostering of bloodshed to bleed Iran and Iraq white, and use the expansion of military operations in the selfish, military and strategic interests of the United States and Israel.

The deafening political scandal, called Irangate in the United States, has confirmed the deranged state into which the present administration has descended. As Jim Sasser, the Democratic senator emphasized, the establishment of an underground network for selling arms to Iran, and secret deliveries of arms to the Nicaraguan contras, in contravention and violation of Congress' ban, is far from being a chance mistake. Those actions are elements of a policy built on deceit, intrigue, and military adventurism. Irangate has demonstrated that lies and deceit have become the basic instrument of the administration's policy, which has lied to the utmost.

As public opinion surveys constantly indicate, the majority of Americans no longer believe their President, and do not approve of the way he is conducting the country's affairs. Reagan's attempts to convince the public that he allegedly forgot whether or not he agreed to the secret arms deliveries to Iran have provoked mocking smiles, and have merely intensifed the mistrust of the President. THE BOSTON GLOBE has just published a satirical article by Art Buchwald with the title: Oh If Only He Could Remember That Day! The article recreates an imaginary conversation between the President and his wife. In order to make it clearer to our listeners, you will speak as the President and I will be be his wife.

Ronnie, all people want to know -- the President's wife asks -- is when you gave the go-ahead for arms deliveries to Iran?

[Pravdin] It's not as simple as that. I bet there is not a single person in our country who can remember when he gave the go-ahead for arms deliveries to Iran.

[Losev] But that's not important. Only one thing is important -- where do you have the button, and how do you press it?

[Pravdin] Which button? I don't know anything about any buttons. Do I really have a button somewhere? What's all this talk about a button?

[Losev] Ronnie, I wrote all that on your shirt cuff. The button is under the dinner table, next to your leg. If you can press it once there is a massive missile strike on the Soviet Union. And if you press it twice it is a signal to the butler to clear the table. Can you remember that?

[Pravdin] Of course. A President always remembers such things. But which butler are you talking about?

[Losev] That was the satirical article written by Art Buchwald.

[Pravdin] Recently, the number of resignations from important posts has increased in the U.S. Administration, and some U.S. observers are expressing the view that the rats are leaving the sinking ship of state. How correct is that conclusion?

[Losev] Indeed, recently resignation has been following resignation in Washington. And some figures, in particular, Vice President Bush, are attempting to distance themselves from the President, and create the impression that they are not involved in Irangate. Bush is doing that in order not to damage his chances in the presidential elections in 1988. Nevertheless, the conclusion about the sinking ship is premature. The U.S. ruling class evidently wants to remove President Reagan from the fire of Irangate, and is striving to rescue him. In other words, the ruling class does not want to subject the bourgeois system to a second shock of the Watergate type, and is afraid of upsetting the boat.

In attempting to give the administration a fresh face, Howard Baker, the new White House chief of staff, is fervidly getting rid of the main characters in Irangate, whose reputations have been well and truly sullied. I should recall that those who have resigned inlcude William Casey, the director of the CIA, Poindexter, the President's national security adviser, and many others. We will see whether the presidential balloon takes to the air after that ballast has been thrown overboard. In any case, the present administration's reputation has suffered irreparable damage, and it is hardly likely to be put right again in the remaining two years in presidential office. [passage omitted]

GROMYKO ADDRESSES CHILDRENS' PEACE GROUP 20 MAR

LD210314 Moscow Television Service in Russian 2015 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Speech by Andrey Gromyko, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, at 20 March meeting in Moscow with members of an international childrens' peace mission -- recorded]

[Text] With me here in the Presidium are Menteshashvili, secretary of the Supreme Soviet Presidium; Sergey Vladimirovich Mikhalkov, the outstanding Soviet writer, and a children's writer, too; and Genrykh Aviezerovich Borovik, another outstanding Soviet writer and journalist.

I would like to thank wholeheartedly all the young speakers who have each in their own way expressed the main idea and feeling by which people live today. Thanks to you all for these kind words. I shall say that such words, proceeding from adults and from politicians, too, are and always will be highly esteemed. What you have said, our dear young guests, is the truth. People want life; they want life, not death. And if one now asks the question, what now causes the greatest anxiety to people in the world, both adults and young people, schoolchildren, young people as a whole? They are worried about the destiny of peace.

Probably every young person, as soon as he starts to think, asks himself: What of tomorrow? Me, my family, those close to me, my friends, and my friends' friends, and mankind as a whole; how is mankind to live, or does some sort of catastrophe await it? That's a legitimate question.

Just decades ago, let's say half a century ago, this question and the answer to it had a different significance. There were wars, terrible, dreadful wars, which swallowed up millions and millions of human lives. But mankind has never experienced a war that was capable of bringing the calamities a nuclear war would lead to. It has now been accurately and scientifically proven that were this catastrophe to be unleashed, if nuclear weapons were set in motion, then life would disappear on earth. The earth would turn into something like a cemetery. This should indeed worry every thinking person -- old, young, or even very young. It must. Everybody must come together to ward off that catastrophe.

This, my dear young friends, is the main question confronting every person and mankind as a whole today. This is what I would like to say, and I hope you will take our answer away with you and tell everyone whom you meet. All Soviet people, everybody, wants only peace, only good relations. We want to live in peace with all countries, including the United States. There are young guests here who recently visited the United States. They met schoolchildren, children just like themselves. Once again, they were convinced of the fact that Americans, the American people -- and we believe this -- also want peace, despise war, curse war. We believe in this desire of the American people. We consider that Americans and our people should stretch out their hands to one another; we are ready, and we are doing this. We are stretching out the hand of peace and friendship to all peoples, to the people of all countries -- Americans, and Britons, and the French, and West Germans, and Italians, and to all countries. We would like your trip to augment the number of people standing up for peace and against war; we want this number to grow. You will be in India; you will be in Japan. I hope you will agree to do this. Please convey the ideas of our Soviet people, of Soviet children and Soviet schoolchildren, students and the people as a whole: We want to live only in peace and friendship with all countries, including with India and Japan.

A second question arises -- this is a question that may arise in both young and very young little heads, and every adult will ask himself such a question: What can one do, what is the most reliable way to avoid this nuclear catastrophe I was speaking about, to avoid the cemetery, to ensure that life triumphs? The most reliable way -- I beg you to remember this -- is to destroy the terrible weapons that have been invented in the world, that is, nuclear weapons. Destroy them! [applause]

We Soviet people, the Soviet people, our leadership, headed by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, whom you have mentioned to us here, we insist upon this. Destroy nuclear weapons. And then, all people on earth can breathe freely.

We insist on such a policy of eliminating nuclear weapons. We also insist that people grant to those generations whose life will begin at the end of this century -- and there is not so much time left before the century expires -- conditions in which nuclear weapons will be absent. We consider that those generations, at the beginning of the new century, should be granted the dearest of all presents: a nuclear-free world. That would be the most invaluable present for everyone. We consider that at present all the efforts of those who determine the policy of states should be directed at destroying nuclear weapons and at making the world nuclear-free.

We might be told -- and indeed we are told -- that it is difficult to do all that at once. We are willing to concede that it is not easy, although given the desire and the resolve it is possible to do so. Mankind has created these weapons and mankind can destroy them as well. However, the task can be made easier by destroying the weapons in stages, by coming to an understanding and by signing corresponding agreements with those countries who possess nuclear weapons. This applies above all to the United States and the Soviet Union for understandable reasons. One could come to an understanding on the destruction of a part of the weapons by a specific date and it could even be stated in the agreement by what date. Then one could continue efforts to destroy the next part, and before the end of the century completely destroy these terrible weapons. If one were to express our policy briefly and in a concise and popular form, that is what it comes down to. I'm referring to foreign policy.

As for the domestic affairs of each state, let each state tackle its domestic affairs itself. We determine our domestic order and the Americans must determine their domestic order in which they want to live. This applies to other countries and other peoples, too.

That is what I wanted to say to you above all, because I sensed in your heads and hearts a great concern over the situation in the world and anxiety for the future. I hope that I have, at the same time, also answered the question posed by our guest from India. I would like to add a few words though. As Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev said to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during his visit to India, we also wish to maintain good and friendly relations with that great country. We profoundly respect the peace-loving actions of the people.

In conclusion, dear guests, I shall say that in our country we are constructing our peace policy as well, proceeding from the fact that there should be peace in the world. We are constructing our policy both in the development of the national economy -- in the economic sphere, as they say -- and with regard to various other kinds of problems usually known as social problem and other public problems by orienting ourselves toward peace and peace alone.

We are pursuing peaceful aims and nobody should entertain any thoughts about our peaceful construction causing harm to anyone. No, on the contrary. Everyone should be satisfied, because we will have more opportunities to trade, to establish business contacts with other states -- this will be good for both adults and youngsters and the younger generation -- to help one another, to exchange valuable material; in a word, to sustain an atmosphere and relations of peace, peace and only peace.

Do not tire, dear young friends -- and I address myself here to older friends, too -- do not tire of carrying out this noble work you are engaged in.

Each day lived through will multiply your strength, if this strength is directed toward preventing war and toward preserving peace; not only the Soviet people, but other peoples will applaud you for this activity. I wish you success in this noble work you are carrying out. You already know the way to the Soviet Union well, and if anyone, for example, loses their bearings a bit, just ask us, please, ask Madame Montandon [one of the childrens' chaperons], she'll help in that regard. We beg you to come to see us again. When you leave us, take with you our very best wishes. This concerns all of you. Thank you for the good words you have spoken; we esteem this highly, for truth itself was uttered by your lips. Good-bye.

FEDYASHIN CRITIQUES REAGAN COMMENTS ON ECONOMY

LD212336 Moscow TASS in English 2322 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] Washington March 22 TASS -- TASS correspondent Andrey Fedyashin reports:

President Ronald Reagan spoke to the Americans on Saturday in his weekly radio address broadcast from Camp David, Maryland.

Judging by his statement, the Americans have no grounds to be worried about the future of the country's economy in which last month "employment reached record highs, poverty is declining, tax rates are falling and family income is rising".

But there is one abiding problem that could plunge the United States right back into economic winter, the President said.

That problem, according to the President, is in the United States Congress which up to now is unable to balance the Federal budget, to eliminate budget deficits, and which interferes with the realisation of the administration's well-considered and substantiated budget plans.

The radiant sentiments expressed by the U.S. President are not shared, however, by leading U.S. economists.

The sentiments are not backed up by government statistics either.

According to statistics, there is winter, not spring, in the U.S. economic calendar.

Thus, according to the data of the Department of Labour, U.S. Gross National Product grew last year by only 2.5 per cent as against the four per cent promised by the administration. This was the worst economic growth indicator since 1981-1982.

The number of unemployed keeps at a rate of 6.7 per cent of the economically active population.

As of today, 7.97 million Americans are out of jobs. Another 5.78 million are part-time workers. According to the American Mayors' Conference, the number of the poor grew in 1986 in two out of every three U.S. cities.

As far as the U.S. federal budget deficit is concerned, it reached 220,700 million dollars last fiscal year which ended on September 30.

According to the forecasts of the Department of the Treasury, the federal budget deficit may run at over 173,000 million dollars in the current fiscal year. And it is not at all Congress that is guilty of that but U.S. outsize military expenditures which swallow a lion's share of the Federal budget.

The administration is asking Congress to allocate 312,000 million dollars for the Pentagon for next fiscal year alone.

In answer to Reagan's radio address Vic Fazio, California, member of the House of Representatives, said on behalf of the Democratic Party that it was precisely Washington's military policy that was the main cause of U.S. budgetary and economic ills.

Mr Fazio went on to say that it had taken the United States 200 years to accumulate a debt of 1,000,000 million dollars. However, the amount of national debt more than doubled since 1981 when Reagan had taken office. He said the payment of interest on the debt alone amounted to 140,000 million dollars a year now.

U.S. REAFFIRMS STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN PERSIAN GULF

LD240905 Moscow TASS in English 0803 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Washington March 24 TASS -- Marlin Fitzwater, an official representative of the White House, reaffirmed on Monday that the United States was ready to use any means to keep shipping lanes open in the Persian Gulf. A day earlier this was stated by U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

According to Fitzwater, the Pentagon chief made the statement intentionally in order to reaffirm once again the allegiance to U.S. strategic interests in that part of the world. The White House representative, however, refused to comment on possible U.S. actions in the Persian Gulf. He asserted that American combatant ships amassed there were discharging a usual mission, which, as he said, can be characterised as the continuing manoeuvres in the region.

KHARKOV HITS U.S. PRESENCE IN PACIFIC, INDIAN OCEANS

LD231602 Moscow TASS in English 1300 23 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS -- By TASS news analyst Vasiliy Kharkov:

Seventeen U.S. warships led by the Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier have re-entered the Arabian Sea. The movement of the large U.S. armada to the northern part of the Indian Ocean threatens to aggravate the dangerous tensions in the region.

The Pentagon seeks to turn the Indian and the Pacific Oceans into an arena of military and political confrontation and a site for deploying nuclear missiles as it has done in Western Europe and the adjoining Atlantic Ocean.

The United States ensures its economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region through transnational corporations. The establishment of a ramified network of military bases in foreign territories, the deployment of strike forces there and the dispatching of aircraft carriers are component parts of Washington's neoglobalist policy.

The Far East and the western Pacific are the site of the U.S. Armed Forces' second largest group numbering more than 500,000.

The United States maintains about 350 military bases and facilities in the region the largest of them being Subic Bay and Clark Field in the Philippines.

The two key bases constitute a link between military groups in the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.

One aircraft carrier group of the U.S. Navy, carrying nuclear weapons, is constantly deployed in the Indian Ocean. The Pentagon is also developing an infrastructure there to carry out its first strike strategy.

Under U.S. plans, armed forces numbering up to 600,000 can be deployed in the region in the case of "emergency". The Central Command, Centcom, set up specially for the purpose has included the territories of 19 Indian Ocean countries in the zone of its responsibility.

The United States is developing a ramified network of bases and other military facilities around Diego Garcia, a large military base in the centre of the Indian Ocean.

The U.S. plans to spend 14 billion dollars by next year to fit out the bases. This is the largest programme of U.S. military investments abroad since the end of the Vietnam war.

The Soviet Union has advanced a programme of specific measures to defuse tensions in the region. The programme's aim is to start demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean, as demanded by the United Nations's declaration, and ensure proper conditions for the joint search by countries of the Asia-Pacific region for ways to promote peace and security in the vast area where two-thirds of the world's population lives.

ZORIN APPRAISES PERLE, BUCHANAN, REGAN DEPARTURES

LD210147 Moscow Television Service in Russian 2040 GMT 20 Mar 87

[From the "World Today" program presented by Valentin Zorin]

[Excerpts] A few days ago news emerged about the coming resignation of Richard Perle, U.S. assistant secretary of defense. We informed you of it. However, for several days this news has been attracting enhanced attention from the commentators of the world press and has been the subject of very animated discussion. [passage omitted] The news of Richard Perle's coming resignation is regarded in the Western presss as a first-rate political sensation, and I must say that I fully agree with this appraisal. Let me now try to explain to you the reason.

The real role that been played by Richard Perle, 45, throughout the entire period that Reagan has been in the White House and Weinberger at the Pentagon has exceeded many times over his relatively modest official post. In having regular contact not only with his immediate chief, the head of the Pentagon, but also -- through the efforts of Weinberger -- in having obtained immediate access to the Oval Office of the White House, during Reagan's presidency Perle has been a key figure in the formulation of the militarist policy and the aggravation of a campaign of malice and hatred toward the Soviet Union. [passage omitted]

Perle, the intellectual, who put his talent and abilities at the service of the forces of extreme reaction -- and by no means for selfless motives -- quickly became an alter ego for Caspar Weinberger, and afterward acquired a great deal of personal influence with President Reagan as well. We had an opportunity to see how Perle used this influence in Geneva and Reykjavik during the Soviet-U.S. summit meetings, where he played a most negative and at times simply provocative role.

I think what I have been telling you is an explanation of the unusual amount of attention drawn by the news that this influential figure in the Reagan administration has resigned. But I think there is an even more important circumstance that justifies our interest in this event.

Can it be regarded as just fortuitous that an influential figure like Perle is quitting the government chariot precisely at the present time? In order to answer this question it is necessary to appraise this fact not just by itself, but in connection with a whole series of resignations by high-ranking Washington leaders that has taken place lately. Patrick Buchanan, an adviser to the President, was fired from the White House staff last month. He is well-known as one of the main ideologists of the extreme right wing and the author of the most odious and ill-famed speeches of Reagan about the Soviet Union being an empire of evil and about the crusade against the USSR. Donald Regan, the White House chief of staff and a Wall Street banker, who occupied a position on the extreme right wing of U.S. politics, has been replaced by former Senator Howard Baker, who occupies a position closer to the political center and who has been hatching plans to become President himself. In beginning his presidential campaign Baker won some points by criticizing the extreme nature of the administration's militarist and anti-Soviet course.

If one brings all this together, then the conclusion inevitably arises that the most odious right-wing politicians have now been forced to quit the Reagan administration. [passage omitted]

It would of course be premature to draw too far-reaching conclusions from the resignation of a few extremely reactionary Washington leaders. But personally I have no doubt that these resignations are a symptom of an important political process. This is why I have paid so much attention and space to this theme.

GENRI: 'OLIGARCHY' LEADS U.S. DOWN 'DANGEROUS PATH'

PM231525 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 19 Mar 87 p 3

[Ernst Genri article under the rubric "Thoughts of a Publicist": "Had America Chosen Another Road..."]

[Excerpts] One day, no doubt, the chroniclers of our time will come to the conclusion that the American financial oligarchy made the United States into one of the world's least popular great powers. If an international public opinion poll were held in the world today to find out whom people fear most, from whom they primarily expect unpleasant surprises, and whose policy irritates them most, the United States would undoubtedly receive most votes. Nowadays, hardly anyone would question the view that the United States occupies the foremost place in this sphere. The words "Pentagon," "State Department," and "CIA" have become synonymous with high-handed and aggressive behavior. In any case, it is beyond question that of all the governments of major Western powers, the Washington administration now occupies the most aggressive position. [passage omitted]

Yet the name of another U.S. President, a man of our time, comes to mind: Franklin Roosevelt.

Roosevelt was not a socialist, nor even a politician of the left. He was leader of the U.S. Democratic Party, the selfsame party which is aspiring to power now. His government included a number of representatives of the haute bourgeoisie. At the same time, Roosevelt represented the sentiments of broad strata of the U.S. petite and moyenne bourgeoisie. [paragraph continues]

He understood ordinary Americans and they understood him; some of Jefferson's and Lincoln's ideals were alive in the man who ruled the country from a wheelchair. Expressing the freedom-loving traditions surviving in the American people's consciousness, he was not afraid to oppose fascism. Under his leadership, the United States joined the anti-Hitler coalition. With his closest participation, the first steps toward peaceful coexistence were taken.

Roosevelt was a bourgeois politician. He had connections with big business without which he could not have entered the White House. However, he did not permit the "invisible" forces of U.S. big business to forge a link between the United States and international reaction, between the United States and international reaction, between the United States and fascism. That is why America achieved considerable successes under Roosevelt.

But perhaps we should stop reminiscing about the past and look at the present. We know that America is a great country. No one can build the future of the world without the Americans. However, the oligarchy which reigns across the ocean is leading the country down a slippery and very dangerous path.

America's greatness does not lie in nuclear bombs and ICBM's; others have them too, and they are not a yardstick of peoples' real progress. America's greatness does not lie in the aggressive military blocs which stretch right across the world; none of these can halt the spread of world socialism and the world national liberation movement, just as in the past the English king with his armies of mercenaries on different continents was unable to stop the growth of independent America's might. America's greatness does not lie in a "position-of-strength" policy, or the strategy of "offensive defense," or the development of SDI. This kind of position and this kind of strategy have never led to real victory.

America's greatness does not lie in bombers which destroy the populations of freedom-loving countries from the air; that is what the Hitlerites did, and it was their undoing. It does not lie in collusion with colonialism, that is a slap in the face for George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It does not lie in support for racism at home and abroad; that means renouncing Abraham Lincoln. It does not lie in alliance with German revanchism; that is a betrayal of Franklin Roosevelt and the Americans who died in World War II.

America's greatness in our time, as in the past, lies in what the best Americans always wanted -- the right of all peoples to freedom, the defense of the cause of peace, the struggle for justice in international relations, and opposition to the forces of reaction. Not one of these ideals has become outmoded or been overtaken by modern technology, economics, science, or ethics. Unquestionably, if America were traveling along this road now, it could again be playing a great and fruitful role in world affairs. There is still time. If, for instance, the United States put its relations with the peoples of Latin America and the Near and Middle East today in order, its international prestige would increase.

But the transatlantic billonaires evidently prefer another road. Where does it lead? Not long ago, commenting on difficulties in the implementation of the Pentagon's plan, THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote: "We will end up in one hell of a mess unless something is done soon." So far, nothing has been done...

Sociologist Wright Mills notes with a bitter smile that the U.S. ruling circles seem to think that they represent divine providence on earth. Here and there in the world people have begun to ask in recent years in connection with the imperious declarations coming out of Washington. Do the Americans think they are god? Meanwhile a leading U.S. newspaper sees the writing on the wall.

We are not very interested in theology. Our main concern in this context is: How can mankind, with the smallest possible sacrifice and suffering, negotiate the critical points of the 20th century and progress toward a great future? Here, I believe, we agree with the overwhelming majority of Americans and people in other countries. There is and there can be no alternative to the difficult but nonetheless realistic ways of peaceful coexistence for achieving sensible international relations in our time.

What would have happened if America had chosen a different road since World War II? Have thinking Americans ever considered this question? There is still time to give it some thought.

TASS NOTES DEVELOPMENT OF LOCKHEED 'SPY SATELLITE'

LD240735 Moscow TASS in English 0722 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] San Francisco March 24 TASS -- The California-based Lockheed Aircraft Corporation is finalizing the construction of the first spy satellite of a new generation.

The Keyhole-12 space complex will be fitted out with particularly powerful instrumentation which will enable the Pentagon and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to conduct round-the-clock observation on any point on the globe, to receive visual data in heavy overcast and night-time conditions, and to intercept radio and telephone conversations.

The first launch of the satellite is scheduled for 1988.

At least four spy stations are to be launched into orbit at the beginning of the 90s.

A report in the SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER has it that the principal goal of the Keyhole programme is to gather reconnaissance information about the Soviet Union.

POLYAKOVSKIY VIEWS PAISLEY ASW CRISIS REMARKS

LD201039 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0345 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Washington, 20 Mar (TASS) -- TASS correspondent Oleg Polyakovskiy reports:

The Pentagon has discovered a new threat to the U.S. from the USSR. This time it comes from Soviet submarines. "We are on the threshold of a crisis in our capability to wage anti-submarine warfare (ASW)," Melvyn Paisley, assistant secretary of the Navy (Research, Engineering and Systems) told legislators in a report, whose contents became known on Thursday.

This is not the first time that the Pentagon has discovered "windows of vulnerability" in America to a nuclear strike from the USSR. Always following on such "discoveries" are demands for immediate allocation of (or increases in) funding for this or that military program, before the USSR uses the "window of vulnerability" and starts a nuclear war. Nor has there yet been a time when the Congress has failed to heed these prayers without delving particularly into the question as to how a worldwide nuclear catastrophe could meet Soviet interests. Neither has there yet been a time when these "windows of vulnerability" have not turned out to be myth. However, the money wrung out of the legislators for them has remained quite real.

"The time for change has come," said M. Paisley in his report, but hardly meaning that it is time to alter this vicious practice. No. He sees the urgency for changes in that up till now Congress is supposed to have paid little heed to naval demands for a sharp increase in funding for submarine warfare.

It's a familiar chain of events: the discovery of a "window of vulnerability," a demand for allocation of new resources, and then their allocation. Now only the last link in the chain is missing: Congress has not yet allocated the money. But on the other hand, the Pentagon has not yet sent Congress a concrete demand, continuing its elaborations on the plan for a new military program which it promises to submit to the legislators in the coming weeks. Going by the experience of past years, that is when another link will fall into place in the vicious chain of escalation in the arms race urged on by Washington.

MURAKHOVSKIY RECEIVES CANADIAN WHEAT OFFICIAL

LD171941 Moscow TASS in English 1929 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS -- Vsevolod Murakhovskiy, first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, chairman of the USSR State Agro-Industrial Committee, received today Charles Mayer, Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board).

They had a conversation about the improvement of trade and economic relations and about ways of improving cooperation in the sphere of agriculture. The Canadian side was informed by the Soviet side about the measures taken in the USSR today for increasing the output of grain and other foodstuffs.

Vernon Turner, ambassador of Canada to the USSR, took part in the conversation.

Nikolay Komarov, first deputy minister of foreign trade of the USSR, met Charles Mayer. During the conversation the sides exchanged views in a constructive manner on a wide range of questions connected with Soviet-Canadian trade and emphasized, among other things, the importance of the expansion of Soviet exports to Canada.

IZVESTIYA LAUDS JOINT DPRK TIMBER COOPERATION

PM231637 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Mar 87 Morning Edition p 5

[Special correspondent B. Reznik report under the rubric "USSR-DPRK: Horizons of Cooperation": "The Taiga Made Them Friends"]

[Excerpts] Pyongyang-Khabarovsk -- The Far Eastern taiga is the benefactress and joy of the people there, a reliable source of foreign currency for the country, and a very important raw materials base for our internal national economic needs. It contains many young forests and quite a few mature and maturing ones which must be brought into industrial circulation.

However, the acute shortage of worker cadres is holding back an increase in volumes of timber procurement. When the government of people's Korea asked our country 20 years ago to sell timber, there came into being a new form of international socialist economic partnership: We suggested that the DPRK organize timber procurement on the territory of the Soviet Far East, using its own manpower. At the same time it was agreed that the timber cut by Korean lumberjacks would be distributed on a mutually advantageous basis: Some of it would go to their new construction sites, while the rest would go to us as compensation for providing the forests, machinery, and mechanisms.

Both sides benefit: The DPRK keeps the foreign currency that it needs so badly for foreign trade operations, while our country saves labor resources and receives an additional source of raw timber. The agreement concluded on this basis 20 years ago has since been renewed three times -- a true sign of the durability and effectiveness of cooperation.

The first Korean timber procurement establishments were constructed in the region of the present Urgal Station on the Baykal-Amur Main Railroad. The taiga there is rich in spruce, fir, and larch. Far Eastern lumberjacks helped the friendly country's workers and specialists to settle in the new place, equipped their enterprises with highly productive equipment, and trained them to work with it.

That was the beginning. The DPRK's emissaries have now constructed 15 comprehensive and well equipped timber procurement establishments in the taiga tracts of Khabarovsk Kray and Amur Oblast.

Soviet and Korean lumberjacks have common cares and concerns in their life. They endeavor to manage the forests thriftily and to make comprehensive use of not just commercial timber but also firewood. Shops and installations to process low-grade timber into chips for further processing have been constructed in all timber procurement establishments, including Korean ones.

We know what a strained situation has taken shape in our railroad transport and how important it is to accelerate rolling stock turnaround in order to ensure the uninterrupted conveyance of freight. Our Korean friends are interested in an efficient supply of cars to dispatch timber products to enterprises and new construction sites in their country. Therefore, together with their Soviet colleagues they warmly supported the Gorkiy Oblast workers' initiative in organizing rolling stock repairs and repaired approximately 5,000 freight cars and flatcars over the past 2 years.

All these are facets of the international socialist competition between the two countries' lumberjacks, in which the chief thing is to produce more timber. The strenuous joint socialist pledges adopted in honor of the 27th CPSU Congress and the 20th anniversary of Soviet-Korean cooperation in the timber procurement sphere were fulfilled.

Official agreements are not things in which you would make provision for the friendly disposition, the warmth, or the sympathetic concern with which Soviet people treat the Korean citizens who have come to us to work. Yet they spend their leisure time together and participate in international song and dance evenings and sports competitions which are held regularly in the spacious and modern House of Soviet-Korean Friendship and Technical Propaganda constructed in the settlement of Chegdomyn.

But friendship and even self-sacrifice for the sake of this friendship are manifested particularly vividly under extreme conditions, when people's health and sometimes even their lives are in jeopardy. [passage omitted]

Soviet-Korean cooperation in the timber procurement sphere has entered its third decade. What are its prospects? How will it affect the further strengthening of the economy and friendly ties between our countries? In Pyongyang we talked about this with Comrade Kim Chae-yol, DPRK minister of forestry.

"You have seen our new construction sites and seen how we are fulfilling the extensive program of socialist transformations outlined by the Workers Party of Korea," the minister said. "We are greatly helped in this by the timber materials delivered from the Soviet Far East. Many thousands of our citizens who have worked at timber procurement establishments on Soviet territory have received lessons there not only in professional skill but also in international friendship. We favor strengthening, broadening, and deepening this cooperation. Along with other diverse forms of economic, cultural, and spiritual ties between the DPRK and the USSR, it will serve the cause of our peoples' still closer rapprochement."

'DIPLOMATIC SOURCES' WELCOME ROK-DPRK DIALOGUE

OW201455 Tokyo KYODO in English 1445 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Tokyo, March 20 KYODO -- The Soviet Union welcomes an initiative by the United States to help resume dialogue between North and South Korea, Soviet diplomatic sources said Friday.

The sources said dialogue between the two Koreas will contribute to peace and security in this part of Asia.

The sources apparently referred to U.S. readiness for resuming talks between American and North Korean diplomats at social gatherings.

On bilateral issues, the sources said there has been no progress in preparations for Soviet Communist Party [General Secretary] Mikhail Gorbachev's Japan visit.

Gorbachev has been invited by the Japanese Government to visit Tokyo for talks on economic problems and the northern territorial issue.

Japan's claim over the Soviet-occupied territory east of Hokkaido has caused a stalemate in Tokyo-Moscow relations.

VAVILOV DERIDES U.S. STANCE ON DRA, PAKISTAN

LD121735 Moscow TASS in English 1517 GMT 12 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow March 12 TASS -- TASS news analyst Valeriy Vavilov writes:

It has already become a tradition in the policy of the U.S. Administration that whenever positive signs appear in the question of political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, they in Washington immediately start looking for and find the ways to hamper this process, to prevent arrangement.

The same script is now played in Washington. Another stage of the current round of the Afghan-Pakistani talks just ended in Geneva. In the appraisal of personal envoy of the U.N. Secretary General Diego Cordovez, a real and concrete progress had been reached there. He emphasised that both sides had realised that they are advancing in one and the same direction, toward political settlement.

Going by statements from Washington, precisely this prospect, a political settlement, does not suit the U.S. Administration. This was yesterday confirmed by Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Frank Carlucci, who said that Washington is prepared to increase aid to the Afghan counterrevolution. The same idea was expressed in the White House today by another high official of the U.S. Administration who wished that his name should not be given. Rejecting Diego Cordovez's positive assessment, he said that proposals of the Afghan side cannot be viewed by Pakistan and mujahidins (Afghan "contras") as serious and trustworthy.

Granting hundreds of millions of dollars to the counterrevolutionary force and supplying them with the latest arms, including missiles, Washington continues banking on extremist groups of adversaries of national reconciliation who persist with their intentions to resolve the Afghan problem by a military, not a political, way.

Washington tries to involve Pakistan in that venture, too. Exerting strong economic and political pressure on Islamabad, Washington tries to force others to pool [as received] chestnuts out of the fire of the undeclared war against the DRA, interferes with the natural striving of the Pakistani people to normalize relations with its neighbour. Showing interest in the quest for a political settlement, the Pakistani side, as Pakistan's foreign Minister Yaqub Khan said, is prepared to use any opportunity that can lead to an early and successful conclusion of the Geneva talks. He said Pakistan believes that the process of true reconciliation conducted in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and supported by the Afghan people, including Afghan refugees, and complying with their wish, will facilitate a successful conclusion of political settlement.

One cannot but admit the justice and relevance of this conclusion. But in order to implement it, to achieve real political settlement round Afghanistan, an end must be put to the interference by Washington and all other anti-Afghan forces, non-resumption of outside interference guaranteed, and a policy of crude pressure on Islamabad stopped.

IZVESTIYA VIEWS 'DIFFICULT PATH' OF DRA SETTLEMENT

PM231447 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 87 Morning Edition p 3

[Own correspondent D. Meshchaninov dispatch: "Peace Formula..."]

[Text] Kabul -- On the night of 20-21 March the Afghan people celebrated the coming of the New Year according to the local calendar.

The chief event of the past Afghan year was the DRA Revolutionary Council's adoption of the declaration "On National Reconciliation in Afghanistan." On 15 January the Afghan Armed Forces unilaterally ceased fire for 6 months and returned to where they are permanently based. Soon an amnesty was declared for persons who decide to renounce antipopular activities. Extraordinary national reconciliation commissions were set up throughout the country.

Just over 2 months have elapsed since then. The situation in many Afghan provinces is gradually being normalized. Despite difficulties, the state is resolving the numerous economic and social problems which have accumulated over the years of the undeclared war. More than 34,000 refugees have returned to the motherland from Pakistan and Iran. Approximately 10,000 members of armed formations have laid down their arms and sided with the people's power. Talks are being conducted with various groupings on reconciliation and cooperation.

Counterrevolutionary extremists, generously supplied and encouraged by Western guardians, disdain no means to wreck the process of normalizing the situation in the country. It is a question of a bloody settling of accounts with those who want to lay down their arms; assassinations of members of extraordinary commissions, activists of women's and youth organizations, and refugees; powerful explosions in Kabul and other major centers in the country, which have claimed dozens of lives of totally innocent people; the deaths of 36 passengers and crew members of an aircraft downed by a missile in the Khowst region; shelling of Afghan Army garrisons; attacks on military columns and posts. Attempts continue to be made to infiltrate weapons and ammunition deep inside Afghanistan. These, too, are recent facts.

The development of events shows what a difficult path national reconciliation still has to travel. Not that anyone expected easy solutions. Persistent struggle and strenuous, painstaking work lie ahead.

PAKISTANI ENVOY DELIVERS NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE

LD232238 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Mar 87

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Today the people of Pakistan celebrate their National Day, Pakistan Day. Taking part in our program is the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the USSR, Shahid Mohammad Amin:

[Begin Amin recording in English with superimposed Russian translation; video shows Amin to camera] Dear friends, today is Pakistan's National Day and I would like to say a few words about my country. [passage omitted] Pakistan is on the borders of the Soviet Union, and is a neighbor of the Tajik SSR.

We have long-established links with the Central Asian republics and this is only one of the aspects of relations between our countries. We have many points of view in common on current international issues; we suport the initiatives on limiting arms put forward recently by the Soviet Union. Pakistan is a nonaligned state. We need peace to develop our country. It is Pakistan's sincere wish to establish good-neighborly and friendly relations with the Soviet Union. The recent visit to Moscow by the Pakistani foreign minister improved relations between our countries. We believe that all disagreements can be resolved by political means on the basis of respect for the principles of international cooperation.

We hope that the talks held in Geneva under United Nations auspices will lead to a solution of the Afghan issue. This is a further contribution to the development of Pakistani-Soviet friendship. Thank you for your attention [end recording]

COMMENTARY HITS U.S. REACTION TO PAKISTANI BOMB

PM231219 Moscow SOTSIALISTICHESKAYA INDUSTRIYA in Russian 19 Mar 87 p 3

[Candidate of Economic Sciences S. Kazennov commentary: "Who Helped To Produce the 'Islamic Bomb'"]

[Text] Recently, world attention has been focused on Pakistan. Abdel Qader Khan, Pakistan's "father of the Islamic bomb," who worked on its development for many years at the atomic center at Kahuta, near Islamabad, issued a statement which has been received with alarm and concern, especially in countries neighboring on Pakistan. In an interview to the British newspaper THE OBSERVER he stated bluntly: "Pakistan has an atom bomb. America knows it."

What is interesting in this context is the U.S. official reaction to this statement. A ranking representative of the Reagan administration has appealed to Congress to avoid "public confrontation" and "legislative ultimatums" which could cause problems with U.S. aid to that country which is geographically of strategic importance...

The point is that at the moment the latest program for granting military and economic aid to Islamabad in excess of the impressive sum of $4 billion is being discussed in the U.S. Congress. Strictly speaking, the Symington amendment which prohibits the granting of any U.S. aid to regimes developing nuclear weapons should be applied to Pakistan. But as Washington attaches increasing strategic importance to Pakistan as a bridgehead against Afghanistan, the Reagan administration has no intention of curtailing in any way its program of military aid to general Ziaul Haq's regime.

Hence, in addition to the mountains of U.S. arms already delivered, Pakistan is to receive aircraft equipped with the AWACS early warning system. It cannot be ruled out that these spies of the air will be serviced by U.S. crews for an indefinite period. Pakistan will also receive more than 200 of the latest M-1 tanks. According to the Indian UNI agency, the M-1 tanks can be used effectively only on flat ground -- which clearly indicates that they are intended for use against India. These tanks are a fundmentally new type of weapon in the region, since they are equipped with a laser guidance system and their accuracy is practically 100 percent.

U.S. arms supplied to Pakistan have been used against India twice in the past 25 years. Experts note that Pakistan's present military purchases, in which offensive arms predominate, appear above all to be suited to waging war precisely against India. [paragraph continues]

Furthermore, the latest nuclear-capable F-16 fighter bombers arriving from the United States are also being deployed at air force bases near the Indian border. There are more than 10 camps in Pakistan where around 6,000 Punjabi extremists regularly undergo training.

After the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran, Pakistan was chosen by Washington as its main outpost in the region. Pakistan's "value" as a strategic ally rose sharply after the formation of the U.S. Central Command (Centcom), whose radius of action comprises the territories of 19 independent countries of the Near East, South Asia, and East Africa and considerable expanses of the Indian Ocean. As is known, the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), which is intended for intervention in the affairs of independent states and the implementation of policing functions, has been attached to Central Command. Pakistan has been chosen as the RDF strongpoint in the region. Its territory could be used during a transfer of the RDF to the Persian Gulf from other U.S. bases in the Indian Ocean or the Pacific.

Nor can the fact that USSR territory is within the range of Pakistan's air bases be ignored. It is obvious that the imperialist forces are trying to transform Pakistan into an Asian extension of NATO's sourthern flank.

The development of Pakistan's military infrastructure is also proceeding at full speed. Islamabad has agreed to the construction of new air and naval bases on its territory and the modernization of existing ones -- on the border with Afghanistan and India and along the Arabian Sea coast. New ports, arms and munition dumps, and other infrastructure installations are being built. With U.S. and other Western support 23 airfields and a strategic communications system are being built.

Military and financial aid from the United States, a number of other imperialist states, and certain Arab countries is reaching Afghan counterrevolutionaries via Pakistan. It totals up to $1 billion annually. According to President Ziaul Haq of Pakistan, the Afghan counterrevolution's struggle "is our struggle." The United States, in turn, refers to Pakistan as a "Frontline State," no less.

As for the development of the atom bomb, in this area too, Pakistan has received considerable assistance from its Western patrons. Radioelectronic equipment for the detonating devices was obtained from the United States. Washington is not hampering the transfer of nuclear technology to Pakistan. The Netherlands, the FRG, France, Belgium, Britain, Italy, and some other West European countries have also supplied Pakistan with equipment for its nuclear needs. In addition to the implementation of the nuclear program, the productin of chemical weapons has also been started up in Pakistan with the help of Western monopolies.

Pakistan's military preparations are being forced on regardless of the country's obvious economic difficulties. The military, and expenditure connected with it, accounts for 50 percent of Pakistan's annual budget and 75 percent if taken together with foreign debt interest repayments. Retail prices are rising by 30 percent a year, and agricultural production is decreasing. Infiltration of foreign capital into the country is on the increase. The country's foreign debt has doubled over the years of military rule and reached almost $13 billion.

These are the gloomy facts of present-day life in Pakistan. They indicate that this country has become an instrument of Washington's neoglobalist policy in South Asia.

PRAVDA ON THATCHER VISIT, POSSIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS

PM240930 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Mar 87 First Edition p 4

[Own correspondent A. Maslennikov report: "It Depends on London"]

[Text] London, 23 Mar -- As the visit by British Prime Minister M. Thatcher to the USSR draws near,more and more commentaries are appearing in the British press on the subject of what the incumbent of 10 Downing Street is taking to Moscow and how her talks in Moscow could affect the state of Soviet-British relations and the international situation as a whole. Naturally, under present conditions, when problems of ending the arms race are at the center of international discussions, everyone is concerned most of all with the question of what role Britain could play in this process, or, more specifically, what contribution it intends to make to the implementation of the Soviet proposal on the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe.

In general terms, London's position on this question was set forth by Prime Minister M. Thatcher in the House of Commons on 3 March, when she welcomed the USSR's new proposal as a "useful step forward." The conclusion of an agreement on medium-range missiles, British Foreign Secretary G. Howe stated, "could change for the better the entire atmosphere in which talks on arms control and East-West relation are held." British Government representatives subsequently explained that they do not insist on the "simultaneous" resolution of the question of medium-range missiles and shorter-range operational and tactical missiles [operativno-takticheskiye rakety menshego radiusa deystviya], as might have been thought from London's initial statements, but advocate the signing of an agreement on medium-range missiles together with subsequent talks on other types of missiles.

At the same time, it must be noted that in the statements of British statesmen and commentaries in the press here, this position is hedged about with all kinds of stipulations. In the course of the discussion of this problem in Parliament, representatives of the ruling Conservative Party expressed the view that since the Soviet proposal itself was the result of "the West's unity and determination," pressure on the USSR should by no means be slackened.

The recent statement by the British prime minister to her supporters at the Conservative and Unionist Associations Central Council in Torquay can hardly be called constructive. Talking about the "humanization of Soviet society," M. Thatcher allowed herself to attack the Soviet Union and openly lauded the "strong-arm approach" in relations with our country. She did not even shrink from asserting that "strength is the most reliable basis forthe struggle for peace," and stated that in Moscow she intends to "seek a peace" based on "realism and strength."

In the era of the universal desire for disarmament and mutual trust, it is hardly likely that such an obsolete vocabulary will bring any statesman success. It should not be forgotten that attempts to talk with the USSR from such positions have never been any use, and have only led the world up blind alleys.

The British right-wing press also persistently promotes the thesis that the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe will supposedly place the Soviet Union in an advantageous position in relation to the NATO countries in terms of shorter-range tactical missiles. That being so, the originators of these concepts say, it is necessary either to abandon the "zero option," leaving at least some of the American cruise missiles and Pershings in Western Europe, or to grant the United States the right to "build up" its arsenals of this type of missile.

Of course, all these arguments ignore the very essence of the USSR's 28 February proposals, which clearly state that our country is prepared immediately after the signing of an agreement on medium-range missiles to withdraw the increased range operational and tactical missiles from the GDR and the CSSR and, at the same time, to embark on talks with a view to the reduction and complete elimination of other types of operational and tactical missiles. All this, I repeat, is very well known to the originators of these concepts. If they continue to seek every possible loophole or pretext for continuing to talk about the preservation and even the buildup of atomic weapons on the European continent, this can indicate only one thing: Certain highly influential circles both in the United States and in Western Europe cannot give up the idea of "nuclear deterrence" or the associated desire to talk to the Soviet Union form a "position of strength."

Unfortunately the spread of such concepts is promoted to a considerable degree by the British Government's own policy. The British leaders make no secret of the fact that they intend to continue to build up their existing nuclear potential. This is the goal served by the plans they have drawn up for reequipping the country's strategic submarine fleet with American Trident-2 missiles.

How are we to assess the search now under way in London, Paris, and certain other NATO capitals for a so-called "European version of nuclear deterrence," which is supposed to replace the medium-range missiles if the Soviet Union and the United States sign an agreement on this question? Speaking at the Royal Institute of International Relations in Brussels the other day, G. Howe, head of the British Foreign Office, insistently sought to persuade his audience that it is time Western Europe started worrying about its own "nuclear future." In the time to come, Howe stated, "European security will depend on nuclear weapons."

These same considerations apparently also dictated the propaganda campaign being conducted against the concept of a nonnuclear defense for Britain, put forward by the Labor Party and other peace-loving forces in the country -- a concept which has received the support of millions of British people and has met with understanding in broad international circles.

In discussing the atmospherre in which the forthcoming visit to the USSR is being prepared, it is impossible to ignore another fact. The changes now taking place in our country are in the main assessed positively by the British public. I was able to see this for myself recently when I was invited to take part in a radio program devoted to the USSR today. Of the 12 telephone calls from radio listeners that I answered, only 2 or 3 were lacking in good will or were frankly hostile. "We are simply astounded," the organizers of the program said afterwards. "If you had taken part in a similar program 2 or 3 years ago, the proportion of well-wishers to enemies of the Soviet Union would have been exactly the opposite."

It is not impossible that this in itself worries some people in Britain today. Strange as it may seem, during the period of preparation for the visit the newspapers and other mass media here have begun to carry articles and commentaries of an anti-Soviet nature especially frequently. The authors try in every way to show that whatever transformations may take place in our country, the Soviet Union has been and will remain the "enemy" of Britain and all the Western world. Of course, the mass media here sometimes have good things to say about the Soviet Union, but usually items of that kind are immediately "balanced" by lengthy discourses by all kinds of renegades from among former Soviet citizens, many of whom have found refuge with all kinds of anti-Soviet centers in the British Isles.

It is these dark forces, which enjoy the open patronage of the British authorities, that are today the source of provocative "initiatives" like the distribution among secondary school students of lists of "freedom fighters" who supposedly continue to languish in Soviet jails, with the proposal that they "monitor" their release. It is representatives of these circles who are setting up more and more new anti-Soviet organizations like the "association of MPs' wives in defense of Soviet Jews." It is these circles that are the source of the advice to the British head of government to set some kind of examination in Moscow on questions of democratization and the observance of human rights.

The originators of such "advice" are obviously not guided by the interests of the successful conduct of the forthcoming Soviet-British talks. It should be clear to everyone that the work being done in the USSR toward renewal and democratization is dictated by the internal demands of our socialist society. It does not need any assessments from uninvited Western "teachers" -- especially not from representatives of a country which is unable to provide nearly 4 million of its own citizens with such an elementary human right as the opportunity to earn a living by their own labor. Soviet people will hardly agree to be given examinations in democracy by those who deprive a whole people of their civil rights -- the 1.5 million inhabitants of Ulster, who have no opportunity to manage their own country's affairs. Finally, it would not enter our people's heads to take political lessons from the leaders of a state where millions of blacks are doomed to the position of second-class citizens, where tens, indeed hundreds, of thousands of families whose skin is not white have no opportunity to be reunited, because of discriminatory laws.

For all that, at present, with the visit only a matter of days away, British political observers are increasingly frequently making predictions about the outcome of the forthcoming talks and their possible influence on international processes, above all in the sphere of limiting the arms race. The assumption is voiced, in particular, that Britain could play the part of catalyst in the attainment of agreements at the current Soviet-American talks on problems of nuclear and space arms and other questions.

Well, London has the objective potential to promote the improvement of the international situation. The idea of the desirability of lessening tension in East-West relations has been repeatedly expressed recently in remarks by British Government representatives. The need for more active involvement in the struggle to rid the planet of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction is voiced with increasing frequency by representatives of the opposition, write organs of the British press. In a word, Britain's contribution to this historical process depends above all on London itself. Only one thing is needed -- for that country's political prestige to weight in the balance on the side of disarmament, trust, and detente.

KORNILOV CONTRASTS USSR, UK IDEA OF 'DEMOCRACY'

LD232018 Moscow TASS in English 1950 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS -- TASS political news analyst Yuriy Kornilov writes:

Speaking to the Central Council of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations at Torquay, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said that London would "welcome any movement towards a more humane society in the Soviet Union." "We hear...words which we recognize like 'openness' and 'democratisation.' But do they have the same meaning for them as they do for us?"

This was a rhetorical question. It went unanswered by its author. We shall try to answer it.

"Democracy," a government by the people, is absolutely incompatible with the rampage of militarism, the preparation for war. Warmongers jeopardize the fundamental right of every human, the right to life. And how "democracy" can go together with the fact that it is precisely the British Conservatives who most zealously declare in support of the Washington SDI which, if implemented, would mean that the arms race assumes unprecedented proportions and that the threat to the lives of millions of people increases many times?

Our notion of genuine democracy is that it is absolutely incompatible with economic, social and political inequality. It is precisely the implementation of the principles of social justice that is central to transformations now taking place in the Soviet Union. And what example is set by those who teach us democracy? There are 3.2 million people in "democratic" Britain who are deprived of man's most important right, the right to work. Within seven years of the Conservatives' rule the number of the poor rose by 50 percent to reach nearly nine million, while the number of the homeless surpassed 100 thousand. Or do they in London regard as an example for emulation the fact that more than ten thousand British people were arrested in the recent years for their taking part in demonstrations of protest against the deployment of nuclear arms on British soil?

While they in London welcomed steps "towards a more humane society in the Soviet Union", a report came from London that the British royal court in Ulster acquitted a policeman who had shot dead young Irish patriot, Sean Downs. It is known that 13 persons, including six children have been killed and 60 others severely injured by plastic bullets since the time they were adopted for use by the Ulster police. In none of the cases those who fired plastic bullets were brought to court. It is also known that over 2.6 thousand people have been killed in Ulster since the so-called "British security forces" were brought there, and the number of wounded is more than 26 thousand. Is mass murder also an example to emulate?

So, whatever way one might look at it, it cannot be said that "democracy" means the same for London and for Moscow. Only when the striking contracts between the rich and the poor are eliminated, when the mass media start regularly criticising corporations, banks and their masters, and not those acting by proxy will the Soviet public believe the assertions about democratism of Western society.

THATCHER GOVERNMENT ARMS POLICY 'HACKNEYED'

LD212049 Moscow TASS in English 1904 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] London March 21 TASS -- British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher addressed a long policy speech today to a meeting of the Conservative Central Council in the city of Torquay. The press association agency described her speech as a "key" one within the framework of the preparations for the general parliamentary elections to be held in the near future.

Touching upon foreign policy issues, the British prime minister again reiterated her government's and the conservative party's intention to approach the key international issues solely from the positions of strength. She described strength as the "surest foundation on which to work for peace."

Margaret Thatcher reiterated the hackneyed proposition of the tories that "it was the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles that brought the Russians back to the negotiating table" and put forward the proposal on the elimination of all nuclear medium-range missiles in Europe. "We see the strength and resolve of the West beginning to reap their fruit." Speaking on the Soviet Union's preparedness to work for a radical cut in the nuclear armaments in the world, she claimed that "nuclear weapons have prevented not only nuclear, but conventional war as well."

As seen from the speech of the British prime minister, she is planning to hold talks on questions of arms control in the course of her forthcoming meetings in Moscow from the "positions of strength."

PRAVDA ON FRENCH TRADE MINISTER'S 'ANTI-SOVIETISM'

PM231255 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Mar 87 First Edition p 5

[V. Korionov "Rejoinder": "At Whose Prompting?"]

[Text] It used to be assumed that the head of a foreign trade department would do first and foremost the work he was appointed to do -- consider and decide on matters of trade between countries. It is also evident that the duty of the person who occupies such an important post and who is a member of the government is to contribute to the establishment of normal and, better still, good-neighborly relations between countries which are trade partners.

Mr Michel Noir, French minister-delegate for foreign trade, has quite different views on this score. In no way do they fit the political climate of the modern world in which the desire to establish relations of trust and mutual understanding between peoples and states is becoming increasingly evident.

There is a growing awareness everywhere that the restructuring taking place in the USSR and the cardinal measures to further democratize Soviet society and ensure greater openness are creating new opportunities for the fruitful development of international contacts. Broad public circles abroad welcome this process, which is inseparable from the USSR's bold, constructive foreign policy initiatives, and are calling for reciprocal action to contribute to the ongoing normalization of the international political atmosphere and the consolidation of world peace.

It infuriates Mr Noir to see events taking this turn. He is on the lookout for any opportunity to revive the guttering flame of psychological warfare. The main target of his hostility is the USSR -- the country that is doing so much to ensure the favorable development of international relations. The French minister-delegate does not mind using coarse abuse in his efforts to present an utterly distorted picture of what is going on here. Sometimes one even wonders: Can such hollering really be coming from Paris in this day and age?

"Trickery and manipulation to confuse Western countries" -- that is the French minister's description of what our people are engaged in at the moment "It is," he announces, "a wide-ranging camouflage operation to which the Russians have given a strange name -- 'openness.'" And if you believe M. Noir, even in the sphere of Soviet cinema and theater the "most extensive publicity and manipulation" is taking place.

Proof, facts, corroboration? It would be futile to look for them in the article in PARIS MATCH which published these "discoveries." The reader only has Noir's word for it when he declares that the restructuring is being carried out in the USSR for one purpose only: "The Russians want to demonstrate in the international sphere that they advocate peace, that they can be believed when they talk about disarmament."

Mr Noir evidently realizes how unattractive he looks in such a provocative role. So he quickly dons the mantle of... defender of human rights. He was apoplectic about the Soviet proposal to convene in Moscow a major conference of the state participating in the all-European conference in order to consider the whole range of humanitarian issues. "It would be worse than the Munich deal; it would be the Europeans' funeral. It would mean they are capable of selling their souls," shouts Noir, who, clearly, long ago sold his soul -- let us hope -- only to the devil. That is what one of those people in the West who pretend to be "defenders" of human rights is actually like!

Even the PARIS MATCH correspondent interviewing Noir could not stand it. "Isn't this activity an obstacle to your ministry's relations with the USSR?" he asked. "No obstacle," the minister-delegate barked back, although he then added with a sigh that he was compelled to maintain interstate relations with the USSR.

But Mr Noir is mistaken. In the first place, it is unseemly of him, in his current position, to engage in fueling anti-Soviet hysteria and to parrot other people's fabrications. Second, is he aware what such propaganda activity by someone who is, after all, in an official position could do to Soviet-French relations. Indeed, for centuries the French have been regarded as masters of diplomacy. But the minister-delegate evidently senses this. For at the end of the interview he is at pains to give assurances: "All of us -- from the Elysee Palace to the Hotel Matignon -- are of one accord." But, apparently, Mr Noir is wrong again. The correction came directly from the Hotel Matignon. Prime Minister J. Chirac called the aforementioned interview "clumsy" and urged his minister to "use more diplomatic language."

Timely advice indeed for the leader of the Foreign Trade Ministry, who has forgotten his immediate duties and is behaving like a second-rate actor performing his role with the aid of the prompter. One thing is unclear, though: Is it a French (remembering that there are anti-Soviet circles in France) or transatlantic prompter?

'NEPSZABADSAG' INTERVIEWS NOVOSTI'S FALIN ON FRG

LD231320 Budapest MTI in English 1235 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Budapest, March 23 (MTI) -- Valentin Falin, chairman of the Soviet NOVOSTI press agency and former ambassador of the Soviet Union to the Federal Republic of Germany, gave an interview to the Bonn correspondent of NEPSZABADSAG on Soviet-FRG relations, on the programme published last week by the reshuffled Bonn government, and on Western reaction to the current changes in the Soviet Union.

Falin stated "difficulties in Soviet-West German relations emerged last year when the West German Government started to deal with the pending issues in a rather one-sided manner and then toughened its relations with the Soviet Union. They started to discriminate [against] us both in economic and other fields. A kind of reverse trend, a return to the state of the previous years seemed to begin in our relations.

"We disagree with that trend," Falin said. "We wish to make a headway in our common causes and not to lose any of the capital stockpiled in the past. However, that depends on both parties simultaneously."

As to the references to East-West relations of the Kohl government's programme Falin said "a general programme of principles of the kind issued by the government may be followed by concrete steps. All depends on what the West German Government is preparing for and what it will do."

Addressing Western reaction to the changes taking place in the Soviet Union Falin said "If you mean governments by the term of 'West,' we cannot yet speak of genuine changes. However, if you mean intellectuals, scholars, political scientists, and mediamen, the assessment some of them give to our internal changes and their international impact is similar to, if not identical with ours. They have the same way of thinking as we do. They seek to find what to do otherwise than was done yesterday or the day before yesterday," Falin stressed.

SPAIN'S SOLANA SIGNS CULTURAL AGREEMENT

LD202343 Madrid in Spanish to Europe 2025 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Today in Moscow Spanish Minister of Culture Javier Solana signed the protocol extending cultural relations with the Soviet Union, which will intensify bilateral contacts between the two countries. The extension of the agreement, which expands that signed in Moscow last May by Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, provides for the holding in Spain in the coming year of a festival of Soviet art.

Next Monday in Moscow, Minister Solana will attend the first performance by the National Ballet of Spain, which has already performed in several Soviet cities.

BRIEFS

AUSTRIAN TELEVISION AGREEMENT -- Moscow March 20 TASS -- An agreement on cooperation in television was signed here today between the State Television and Radio Committee of the USSR (Gosteleradio) and the Austrian Teleradio. The two sides will exchange television materials on the life of the peoples of both countries, television programmes will be made on the most important events in the USSR and Austria assistance will be rendered to journalists and filming groups on a mutual basis. The agreement was signed by USSR Gosteleradio Chairman Aleksandr Aksenov and general director of the Austrian Teleradio Taddeus Podgorski. [Text] [Moscow TASS in English 2139 GMT 20 Mar 87 LD]

OIL CONTRACT WITH SWEDEN -- A major contract for supplying oil has been signed in Stockholm between Soyuzneftexport, the Soviet foreign trade association, and OK petroleum, the Swedish company. It has become another concrete example of the development of trade and economic cooperation between both countries. During this year, oil and oil products from the USSR totalling 1.25 billion Swedish kronas will be dispatched, according to the contract, to Sweden. [Text] [Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 11 Mar 87 LD]

YELISEYEV LEADS PARTY DELEGATION TO MALI

LD201411 Moscow TASS in English 1219 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow March 20 TASS -- A CPSU delegation today left for the Republic of Mali in keeping with a plan of party links between the CPSU and the Democratic Union of the Mali People.

The Soviet party delegation is led by Yevgeniy Yeliseyev, alternate member of the CPSU Central Committee.

Received By Officials

PM231845 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 87 First Edition p 5

[TASS report: "Meeting in Bamako"]

[Text] Bamako, 22 Mar -- A visiting CPSU delegation headed by Ye.A. Yeliseyev, candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee and first secretary of the Kabardino-Balkar CPSU Obkom, was received on Saturday by (Sidiki Diarra), member of the Central Executive Bureau of the Mali People's Democratic Union (UDPM) and president of the Malian National Assembly (parliament).

(S. Diarra) gave a high appraisal of Soviet-Malian cooperation in the area of party building. He expressed gratitude for CPSU assistance in training UDPM cadres and spoke in favor of further expanding fruitful ties between our parties and peoples.

On the same day the delegation had a meeting with (Bubakar Diallo), secretary for administrative affairs in the UDPM Central Executive Bureau, who highly appraised the state of Soviet-Malian relations and expressed gratitude to the Soviet Union for the assistance it gives to the republic.

DELEGATION DEPARTS ANGOLA, ARRIVES IN ZAMBIA

PM201353 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Mar 87 Morning Edition p 4

[Own correspondent F. Konopikhin and TASS reports under the general heading "Busy Program"]

[Text] Luanda -- The group of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies which is in Angola has met with deputies of the Luanda Municipal Assembly. During the talks they were familiarized with the main problems facing the capital's self-management organs.

In a conversation with this correspondent P.G. Gilashvili, deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and head of the group of Soviet parliamentarians, stressed that the program of the visit was very busy. He noted that his Angolan interlocutors had shown considerable interest in the restructuring taking place in our country and how it may be reflected in the Soviet Union's relations with developing states. The head of the group of Soviet deputies also said that Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos had stressed the great importance of the visit for strengthening Angola's positions in the international arena. In the president's opinion, the situation in Angola has recently improved somewhat in connection with the defeats suffered over the past year by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola [UNITA] bandits and the split in their ranks. [paragraph continues]

However, he expressed concern at the possible use by reactionary U.S. circles of new platforms for expanding aggression against the people's power in Angola. He made a high assessment of the recent Soviet peace initiatives aimed at ending the arms race and stabilizing the international situation, in which the developing countries are interested.

On the whole the visit was highly fruitful, and the frank [otkrovennyy] exchange of opinions was useful to both sides, P.G. Gilashvili stated.

On the evening of 18 March the group of Soviet parliamentarians left for Lusaka to continue their tour of the "front-line states" of southern Africa. They were seen off at the capital's airport by Lucio Lara, member of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola-Labor Party and first secretary of the Angolan People's Assembly.

The same day the Soviet parliamentarians arrived in the Zambian capital. They were met at Lusaka International Airport by Alex Shapi, Zamgian secretary of state for defense and security, ranking officials from the United National Independence Party [UNIP] Central Committee apparatus and the republic's Foreign Ministry, and other officials.

Zambia fully supports the Soviet Union's position on nuclear disarmament issues, Alex Shapi, Zambian secretary of state for defense and security, stated here 19 March. Welcoming the group of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies, he stressed that the Soviet peace initiatives aimed at saving mankind from a nuclear catastrophe are the only way to achieve world peace. This accords with the aspirations of all the peoples. A. Shapi expressed the hope that the West would react positively to the Soviet proposals at nuclear disarmament talks.

The secretary of state made a high assessment of the political support and material assistance which the Soviet Union gives Zambia. The USSR, he said, is a long-standing friend of ours. From the time of the independence struggle and since then warm and friendly relations have existed between the two countries and they continue to strengthen. The current visit will be a substantial contribution to the cause of further strengthening Soviet-Zambian cooperation.

A. Shapi noted that there is a dangerous situation in southern Africa caused by the aggressive course of the racist Pretoria regime, which enjoys Washington's direct support. Despite the desire of the region's peoples for peace and stability, the South African racists with U.S. support are continuing to pursue a policy of destabilizing the situation in the "Front-line" States and are giving all-round assistance to the UNITA and so-called "Mozambique National Resistance" terrorist groupings. They supply the insurgents with modern weapons and financial aid.

Since independence the Angolan and Mozambican peoples have been unable to live in peace as a result of the deliberate policy of destabilization pursued by South Africa and the United States, and the continuing course of Washington's so-called "constructive engagement" with Pretoria. Freedom-fighters are dying every day in Namibia and South Africa.

We are fully resolved, A. Shapi stressed, to continue supporting the liberation process in southern Africa and advocate the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the racists.

Shapi Banquet Speech

LD201052 Moscow TASS in English 0858 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Lusaka March 20 TASS -- By TASS correspondent Sergey Kamensky:

The Zambian people set high store by their friendship with the Soviet Union, said Alex Shapi, Zambian secretary of state for defence and security. Addressing a reception on Thursday in honour of the visiting group of the USSR Supreme Soviet deputies led by Pavel Gilashvili, vice-president of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, he said that the USSR had always been a friend of Zambia. These relations, Alex Shapi said, began taking shape even before our country gained independence. And today the USSR is continuing its aid to Zambia. Welcoming the visit of the group of Soviet MPS, he declared for a further strengthening of Soviet Zambian cooperation.

Alex Shapi stressed Zambia's determination to fight for the total eradication of the criminal apartheid system -- the common enemy of all countries of the region. The racist Pretoria regime, he pointed out, shall be destroyed. Alex Shapi has rejected the attempts of the West with the USA at its head to "link" the problem of Namibia's decolonisation with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. Namibia, he said, must be freed without any strings attached.

The Zambian secretary of state for defence and security has condemned the policy pursued by the Pretoria authorities of constructive engagement with the racists.

The U.S. secretary of state [as received] stressed that the visit of the Soviet MPs was highly important and timely. Zambia and the other "Frontline" States, he said, highly appreciate the aid granted by the Soviet Union to the national liberation movements of southern Africa. Alex Shapi expressed confidence of the victory of the just liberation struggle waged by the peoples of Namibia and South Africa under the leadership of South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

Pavel Gilashvili, vice-president of the Presidium of the USSR, who heads the group of deputies of the USSR Supreme Soviet, wished in his reply address success to the peoples of southern Africa and the national liberation movements in the fight for the attainment of their goals.

Talks With Grey Zulu

LD201818 Moscow TASS in English 1750 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Lusaka March 20 TASS -- Zambia fully supports the USSR-Proposed programme of complete elimination of nuclear weapons in the world by the year 2000, said General Secretary of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) of Zambia Alexander Grey Zulu, today.

Receiving a group of deputies of the USSR Supreme Soviet, led by vice president of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Pavel Gilashvili, he said that for the first time in history a statement had been made on the need of eliminating nuclear weapons on earth.

Zambia, said Grey Zulu, welcomes all proposals aimed at prevention of a new world war. The main objective of Zambia, just as of the USSR, is to fight for survival of humanity.

The UNIP general secretary welcomed the visit of Soviet parliamentarians to Zambia and noted the warm, friendly character of relations between the two countries. He favoured further development and consolidation of Soviet-Zambian cooperation.

The UNIP general secretary pointed to a disquieting situation in the south of Africa. The Pretoria regime, he said, continues to occupy illegally Namibia's territory, and ignores U.N. resolutions and the opinion of the international community. The racists insist on a "linkage" between the problem of decolonisation of Namibia and withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. In South Africa itself the authorities supported by its Western accomplices are heightening tension, having launched a campaign of terror against the African population.

Academician Addresses Press

LD211043 Moscow TASS in English 0949 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] Lusaka March 21 TASS -- The president of the Academy of Sciences of Tadzhikistan (a Soviet Central Asian republic) has denounced the purposeful attempts of the Western press to distort the real state of affairs in Afghanistan.

Mukhamed Asimov, now on an African tour as a member of a Soviet parliamentary delegation, told a press conference here that Afghan counterrevolution was supported by the U.S., Iran and Pakistan.

Asimov said that last year the Afghan counterrevolutionaries had received 470 million dollars in aid from Washington, to be compared with 75 million in 1983. This year the bandits are to be given nearly 640 million.

He emphasized that destabilization of the situation in that region was part of U.S. imperialism's policy of neoglobalism.

The Afghan Government is trying to stabilize the situation in the country and solve problems by peaceful means, Asimov said. This is evidenced by a national reconciliation programme announced by the Afghan leadership, a unilateral ceasefire and readiness to form a national unity government with the participation of opposition parties, as well as the Geneva talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The programme advanced by the government enjoys the support of a majority of the country's population and the greater part of small and medium gangs which have laid down arms.

Asimov emphasized that the limited Soviet military contingent would return home provided outside intervention in Afghanistan's affairs discontinued and there were guarantees that similar intervenion would not recur.

Kaunda Address

PM231521 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 87 Morning Edition p 3

[TASS report: "USSR-ZAMBIA: Strengthening Cooperation"]

[Text] Lusaka, 22 Mar -- President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia today noted the great significance of the USSR's peace initiatives designed to save mankind from nuclear catastrophe. He did so when he received a group of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies headed by P.G. Gilashvili, deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, which is visiting Lusaka.

The question of nuclear disarmament, the president said, is the concern of all peoples. In this connection he evaluated highly the unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests announced by the Soviet Union in the past, as well as the program advanced by the USSR for the total elimination of nuclear weapons throughout the world by the year 2000. We hail these peace initiatives of the Soviet state.

K. Kaunda urged Western powers to abandon the old approach to viewing relations with the Soviet Union through the prism of East-West confrontation and once again to heed what M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, proposes in the sphere of nuclear disarmament. We are convinced, the president pointed out, that the recent Soviet initiatives have infused a fresh spirit into international relations.

The president noted the great significance of the USSR's efforts to settle the situation around Afghanistan and in Southeast Asia and to normalize relations with the PRC. We need peace in all regions, he emphasized, and we would like to have good relations with all countries.

People in Zambia are following attentively the course of the social and economic transformations being implemented in the USSR with the support of the entire Soviet people, K. Kaunda said. He expressed gratitude to the USSR for its great assistance to the liberation movements of southern Africa struggling against racism and apartheid in the region.

Speaking of Soviet-Zambian cooperation, K. Kaunda emphasized that good, warm relations have taken shape between the two countries, and he advocated their further development.

The group of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies concluded its stay in Zambia and flew today to Gaborone, capital of the Republic of Botswana.

CUBA'S RAUL CASTRO RECEIVES SLEZKO DELEGATION

PM231841 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 87 First Edition p 5

[TASS report: "Visit to Cuba"]

[Text] Havana, 22 Mar -- Army General Raul Castro, member of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee Politburo, second secretary of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee, first deputy chairman of the Cuban Council of State and Council of Ministers, and minister of the Revolutionary Armed Froces, has received a visiting CPSU delegation headed by P.Ya. Slezko, candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee and first deputy chief of the CPSU Central Committee Propaganda Department. During the conversation the members of the delegation talked about progress made in the restructuring process in the USSR and implementation of the decisions adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress and the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum. In his turn, R. Castro dwelt on Cuban Communist Party activity to step up the process of rectifying past mistakes and removing negative trends and also on the subject of progress made in implementing the Third Cuban Communist Party Congress decisions.

The sides exchanged experience of work in the information and propaganda sphere at the present stage and also discussed other issues of mutual interest.

The CPSU delegation also had meetings with Carlos Aldana, secretary of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committe, and members of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee.

TASS NOTES 'CONTRA' RECEIPT OF FUNDS IN 1985-86

LD212217 Moscow TASS in English 2105 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] New York March 21 TASS -- The main political groups of Nicaraguan contras received about 100,000 dollars as "donations" from the Reagan administration in 1985 and 1986.

This has been admitted in an interview with THE NEW YORK TIMES newspaper by Alfonso Robelo, one of the contra leaders.

He said his political party and another contra political group received ten thousand dollars monthly through Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, staff member of the National Security Council, right up to November last year when the "Irangate" scandal broke out.

Robelo said the money was wired from a Swiss bank to the accounts of the parties at a Costa Rican bank.

The newspaper points out that Swiss accounts were opened by Oliver North and were apparently used as a channel for the diversion of the profits from the secret sales of U.S. arms to Iran.

NICARAGUA PROTESTS OVER SECRETS GIVEN TO CONTRAS

LD211408 Moscow TASS in English 1254 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] Managua March 21 TASS -- The Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry has made a strong protest to U.S. Secretary George Shultz over the disclosed facts of the transfer by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency of secret defence information to the Nicaraguan contra chiefs.

The statement of protest says that according to a report published in the newspaper THE NEW YORK TIMES the CIA sent to the contras precise maps, duplicates of the plans of various areas, information about bridges, dams, power plants, and other civilian and strategic facilities in Nicaragua. It is precisely these targets that are to be destroyed in the first place in the course of the so-called spring offensive of the Somozist cut-throats against the Sandinist revolution in April-May this year.

The Nicaraguan Government, the statement underscores, is expressing an official and strong protest against such actions of the White House and the criminal plans of the mercenaries, which will lead to an escalation of the policy of state terrorism pursued by the USA.

The practical implementation of monstrous and inhuman methods by the Reagan administration, the statement continues, has already resulted in mass killings of the peaceful population of Nicaragua, the abduction of people and tortures, which is a crying violation of human rights. All this is a consequence of the deep-going crisis of the U.S. foreign policy line, when law and morality are replaced with the positions of strength policy and terrorism.

The protest statement demands that Washington immediately put an end to its immoral and criminal policy of state-sponsored terrorism.

NICARAGUAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ON CONTINUED CLASHES

LD181816 Moscow TASS in English 1713 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Managua March 18 TASS -- Forty-seven Somozists have been eliminated by the Sandinista People's Army over the past few days in the course of mopping-up operations in the country's central regions.

The Nicaraguan Defense Ministry announced on Tuesday that fierce armed clashes occurred in the area of Pinuela, Chontales Department.

Following successful combat operations, the Army seized large quantities of weapons, mines and rockets manufactured in the United States. Four mercenaries were captured.

the ministry statement said that contras were continuing terrorist actions against the civilians. They carried out eight armed attacks on cooperatives late in February-beginning of March this year. 16 civilians, including six children, were killed.

PRAVDA CITES 19 MARCH POLITBURO SESSION

PM231425 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Mar 87 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "At the CPSU Central Committee Politburo"]

[Text] At the session that took place on 19 March, the CPSU Central Committee Politburo discussed the main guidelines for restructuring the system of the political and economic education of working people. Indicating the great importance of stepping up Marxist-Leninist theoretical training, the ideological and ethical tempering of cadres, and forming a new type of political and economic thinking in them, the Politburo pointed to the serious shortcomings and negative phenomena that have accumulated in political training and mass economic education.

The main guideines for restructuring the existing system of education were approved. It is intended to alter considerably its organizational structure and to bring the contents, forms and methods of studies into line with the tasks of the acceleration of the socioeconomic development of the country, of making the human factor more active and of the democratization of all spheres of social life.

Communists and nonparty persons must be made fully and profoundly conversant with the decisions of the 27th congress, the CPSU program, the key issues of the innovative party policy, modern achievements of the science of administration and new managerial methods. There are plans for improving the quality of educational programs and textbooks, expanding the production of technical educational facilities, considerably reinforcing the training of propagandists and enhancing the role of universities of Marxism-Leninism and houses and consulting rooms for political enlightenment. It was deemed expedient to combine economic and professional education in an organic whole.

The Politburo stressed that restructuring the political and economic education of working people calls for a radical improvement in the party guidance of this most important sector of ideological work. The draft of the main guidelines for the restructuring of the system of the political and economic education of working people will be published in the press for a broad discussion.

A report by Comrade Yakovlev was heard on the results of the official visit to Spain by a delegation of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet. It was pointed out that Soviet-Spanish relations in various spheres are developing in the spirit of mutual understanding on important international problems, and on a mutually-beneficial basis of cooperation in the economic, scientific and technical and cultural spheres.

It was established with satisfaction that the Soviet-Spanish political dialogue, which has in recent years become a weighty factor in European and world policy, is assuming increasing significance within the context of the general activation of European countries' efforts toward attaining specific accords in issues relating to nuclear weapons reduction, lowering the level of military confrontation in Europe, and establishing a climate of confidence and cooperation.

A number of other matters relating to organizational party work, state construction, and also relations with foreign countries were also discussed at the session of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo.

PRAVDA REPORTS ALIYEV ACTIVITIES IN VOLGOGRAD

PM201347 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Mar 87 First Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Concern For Working People"]

[Text] Volgograd, 18 Mar -- The implementation of the party's social policy and ways of satisfying Soviet people's growing needs as fully as possible were the focus of attention at meetings and conversations between G.A. Aliyev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, with the working people of Volgograd Oblast, where he stayed from 15 through 18 March.

Special attention was paid to the state of affairs in light industry, which has switched to work in the new management conditions. Not all enterprises in the sector were prepared for activity on the basis of complete financial autonomy. For instance, the Kamyshin cotton combine, a major textile industry enterprise visited by G.A. Aliyev, has sustained considerable ecnomic losses because it failed to respond swiftly to changing market demand. Ways of rectifying the situation were discussed with the participation of the leaders of the RSFSR ministries of the light and textile industries and trade.

It was stressed that the sole guarantee of stable, highly efficient work is a sharp improvement in output quality and the all-round development of initiative and socialist enterprise.

At the hosiery and footwear factories the USSR Council of Ministers first deputy chairman familiarized himself with what is being done at the enterprises to restructure work and supply the market with a variety of high-quality goods. Acknowledging the importance of the fundamental retooling of the sector, the workers and specialists leveled just criticism at the machine builders who are not yet manufacturing production equipment that matches the best world standards. There have been many complaints about the quality of dyes for the textile industry.

At the Volgograd tractor plant he familiarized himself with the assembly line producing new high-powered "Volgar" tractors and looked at the model of the future -- a 200-horsepower deluxe tractor. At the exhibition of consumer goods produced by the tractor builders, the enterprise leaders' attention was drawn to the fact that the standard of these articles is entirely inadeqate when compared with the plant's power material base and high technical class.

G.A. Aliyev visited the Central Market, stores, and public catering enterprises and talked with customers.

At a meeting with the collective of the first-aid clinic the discussion was about improving the work of health bodies and improving the quality of public health services.

The city on the Volga is a major transport center. The USSR Council of Ministers first deputy chairman visited the M. Gorkiy Railroad Station and looked round the river station complex. He took a trip on a high-speed street car, which runs partly under ground.

The prospects for the development of the city, which is preparing to celebrate its quartercentenary, were examined during the meeting with Volgograd party and soviet leaders.

The education of the younger generation in the best traditions of the hero-city was the theme of conversations with pupils and teachers of the No 4 boarding school which has set up a museum of combat and labor glory. G.A. Aliyev visited a nursery school built by machine builders and a kindergarten-cum-creche built in accordance with a standard plan.

At the Polytechnic Institute there was a discussion of problems relating to the restructuring of higher education with the involvement of leaders of city VUZ's. The contribution of teachers and polytechnic students to strengthening scientific and technical progress was reflected by an exhibition of technical developments.

The course of restructuring and the practical implementation of the acceleration strategy in the light of the decisions of the CPSU Central Committee January (1987) Plenum were examined during a meeting with the oblast party, soviet, and economic aktiv.

The USSR Council of Ministers first deputy chairman laid a wreath at the mass grave of the defenders of the Volga fortress during the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars in the Square of Fallen Warriors, visited the monument to the heroes of the Battle of Stalingrad at the Mamayev Kurgan, looked at the "Battle of Stalingrad" panoramic display, and talked with veterans of the legendary battle on the Volga.

On his trips around the oblast G.A. Aliyev was accompanied by V.I. Kalashnikov, first secretary of Volgograd party Obkom, and A.N. Orlov, chairman of the oblispolkom.

Addresses Aktiv Workers

PM201545 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 18 Mar 87 Second Edition p 2

[Unnamed TASS special correspondent report: "Concern for People -- the Course of Restructuring"]

[Text] Volgograd, 17 Mar -- The production of consumer goods and the development of the services sphere have a special role to play in the large and complex organism of the socialist economy, since this area is directly bound up with the implementation of the party policy directive on raising the people's prosperity to a qualitatively new level of quality. The 27th CPSU Congress stressed that this task will not be fulfilled if we are unable to fully supply the market with varied goods and services.

What needs to be done to restructure work in this sphere in the spirit of the demands of the CPSU Central Committee January (1987) Plenum? What must be the response of every worker to the CPSU Central Committee Plenum's appeal to the Soviet people? These questions were the focus of attention at today's meeting of the aktiv of workers in the light industry sector, in enterprises of other sectors producing consumer goods, and in trade and the services sphere in Volgograd Oblast. The meeting was addressed by G.A. Aliyev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.

The third spring of renovation is gathering pace on the heroic soil of Volgograd, as it is in the entire country, he said. [paragraph continues]

Since the CPSU Central Committee April (1985) Plenum, the 27th party congress, and the Central Committee January (1987) Plenum a powerful, dynamic boost has been given to social development, and the social activeness of the masses has increased.

The decisions of the January plenum and the report by M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, are of truly historic significance. They have provided a detailed theoretical validation of the concept of restructuring itself and its translation into actual practice. It is essential to stress, in particular, the fundamental conclusion of the plenum: There is no alternative to restructuring, it is an objective necessity, and we must not deviate from our charted course! Communists and all Soviet people were waiting for just such a Bolshevist plenum and pinned their highest hopes on it. Those hopes have been justified!

Last year, the speaker continued, provided us with the first results from the implementation of the course of speeding up the country's development in line with the party's strategy of carrying out profound transformations in the national economy. The example of Volgograd Oblast is a graphic illustration of this.

The party organization, Communists, and working people of the oblast are actively engaged in the struggle to fulfill the decisions of the 27th party congress and are developing work designed to implement the directives of the CPSU Central Committee January Plenum. When analysing the state of affairs from the standpoint of present-day demands, mention must be made of the shortcomings and outstanding problems existing particularly in the sociocultural sphere.

The oblast, unfortunately, failed to meet the planned targets for January-February concerning most indicators. This applies to the sale of output, commissioning of housing, and provision of services to the populace.

G.A. Aliyev noted that the restructuring process taking place in the country's national economy, including Volgograd Oblast, is proving complex and is encountering great difficulties. The brakes on socioeconomic development are being released too slowly, so to speak, and conservatism, bureaucracy, stagnation, inertia, obsolete thinking, and reluctance to assimilate the new style and methods of management are still impeding the mechanism of restructuring.

The 27th CPSU Congress put forward an all-embracing, integrated, and strong social policy. We regard it as a powerful means of activating the human factor and speeding up the country's development. The results of economic activity affecting working people's vital interests are realized precisely in the social sphere. It is there that the humanist nature of the socialist system and its qualitative difference from capitalism are revealed most extensively and graphically.

The further improvement of the supply of consumer goods and services to the populace and satisfaction of Soviet people's growing effective demand make up a very important component of party social policy.

Much must be done if this task is to be resolved. The Comprehensive Program for Developing the Production of Consumer Goods and the Services Sphere in the Period 1986 Through the Year 2000 has been drawn up and is being carried out in the country. [paragraph continues]

A number of important resolutions have been adopted on thoroughly restructuring the economic mechanism in the light industry sector and trade and on producing additional modern technical equipment for these sectors and the services sphere in the current 5-year plan. During the 5-year plan as a whole more than R50 billion -- 50 percent more than in the preceding 5 years -- is being channeled into sectors directly engaged in producing goods and services.

The party puts the matter simply: The task is to raise in a short period of time the production of goods, trade, and services to a fundamentally new level and to do everything to ensure that people in a socialist society are able to enjoy fully and to an ever increasing degree the advantages inherent in our system.

The year 1986 was the Comprehensive Program's 1st year of implementation. During that time production of foodstuffs rose by R6 billion -- more than was planned -- as compared with 1985. The volume of retail commodity turnover (disregarding alcoholic beverages sales) increased by R19.5 billion. Its structure improved. The activity of the services sphere somewhat increased, although changes there are still only beginning.

Light industry workers are required to make a weighty contribution to the implementation of the party social program. Certain improvements occurred in its work last year, but we cannot be satisfied with them: Production growth rates were lower than planned and more than one-third of all associations and enterprises failed to meet fully their contractual obligations for supplies of output.

Switching over to analysis of the work carried out in Volgograd Oblast, the speaker noted that virtually all industrial enterprises in the oblast are involved in the production of consumer goods. This is good, of course. However, it is noticeable that not all collectives regard this important work with the same sense of responsibility. Last year Volgograd enterprises had a production shortfall of goods worth R60 million. In January-February this year only 93 percent of the plan for light industry and cultural-consumer goods was met.

There are large reserves for improvement to be found at the oblast's light industry enterprises, where quite a few pacesetters and innovators are employed. The initiative and enthusiasm of pacesetting workers, foremen, and engineers are the chief reserves. Their outstanding initiatives must be more extensively and boldly introduced and their experience made available to every collective.

Labor enthusiasm must be backed up by skillful production organization, modern equipment, and improved material and technical supply. The line of fundamental retooling sector enterprises must be carried out even more energetically and singlemindedly, and the main thing is that all of the fine production potential in the oblast be used more effectively.

It is impossible to speed up scientific and technical progress today without high-quality output. To achieve this you need good-quality raw materials, advanced equipment and production processes, and conscientious work. If even one link is missing from this chain you cannot expect a good result.

Shortcomings in work designed to enhance output quality have stood out particularly clearly since the introduction of the state acceptance system into many industrial enterprises, including those in the Volgograd Oblast. [paragraph continues]

This measure has, on the one hand, erected a reliable barrier to defective output, while, on the other, revealing a number of serious shortcomings at the work place. The state reception system poses a stiff test for all labor collectives. Passing it means that in many respects you will have advanced the solution of the very important task of enhancing output quality and, consequently, of satisfying Soviet people's increased demands.

Since January light industry has been operating under new management conditions. All sector enterprises have switched to full autonomous financing, self-recoupment, and self-financing. Our task is to ensure that every collective and every working person uses the opportunities made available with the new management mechanism.

The role played by local industry in supplying the populace with various kinds of consumer goods is also growing. Enterprises in this sector here are producing goods worth R48 million per year. For a large oblast like Volgograd this is clearly insufficient.

Good managers know that production of goods, skillfully organized, is a pretty profitable business. One Volgograd steel wire plant, for example, has mastered the production of 37 types of cultural-consumer and household goods. Waste output from the main shops supplies the bulk of the raw material for their production. Work is far from being arranged like that everywhere. One tractor plant is producing goods worth only 16 kopeks for every ruble of the wages fund. Even the goods they do put on the market do not exactly excite the customers.

The value of goods produced per inhabitant in Volgograd Oblast is R211 below the RSFSR average. That is your real reserve! It is not just quantity that in involved. Consumer goods must be technically up-to-date, satisfy the most exacting taste, and be less materials- and energy-intensive. You really cannot offer the customer the same old thing for decades as Volgograd Oblast's "Krasnaya Zarya" plant, which comes under the USSR Ministry of Machine Building for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances, has done, for example. It has been producing the Volzhanka washing machine, with its hand wringer and outdated design, ever since 1967.

Increasing the efficiency of work in the trade sector is an important precondition for the solution of the party's social policy tasks. Trade serves as the link between the production of goods and the actual consumers -- the population.

Since the 27th congress the party and government has been paying particular attention to developing trade. Large-scale resources have been channeled into that sector. The capital investments made during the 12th 5-Year Plan, for example, were 70 percent higher than those utilized in the 11th 5-Year Plan. Many trade leaders have still not drawn the appropriate conclusions from the decisions of the 27th congress and the Central Committee's January Plenum and are adopting an inert, extremely passive attitude to those enterprises which fail to meet their supply plan, offer poor-quality products, poorly study consumer demand, and operate without a clear long-term plan.

The situation with public catering is no better. Less than half the demand in cafes, snack bars, and canteens is satisfied. While the targets set for their development in the last 5-year plan actually faied to be met. What does exist is being poorly utilized.

The sector's switching over to principles of self-recoupment and self-financing constitutes a major step in the improvement of the trade sector. Good opportunities are opening up for trade workers to demonstrate their ability to work effectively and competently and show socialist enterprise, thereby making a weighty contribution to the implementation of party social policy.

Consumer cooperatives have a growing role to play in better meeting people's requirements. People in the Volgograd Oblast have some successes to their credit here. Last year virtually all the increase in commodity turnover was achieved through the oblast potrebsoyuz. However, cooperative workers did not meet the target for overall retail commodity turnover last year and allowed a backlog to develop in the first 2 months of this year.

Consumer cooperatives must substantially increase the influence they exert on lowering market prices. The CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers recently adopted a resolution on measures to improve the operation of those markets which are kolkhoz markets in name only. Last year kolkhozes and sovkhozes were granted the right to sell in the market up to 30 percent of the potatoes, vegetables, and fruit produced by them. However, only 2 percent was sold in the country as a whole. Exactly the same situation obtains in Volgograd Oblast.

The speech also examined in detail the problem of developing a modern services sphere for the population. It is essential to substantially expand the amount of paid consumer services, to qualitatively restructure the whole sphere of services, and to create a vibrant, powerful leisure industry and system which satisfies Soviet citizens' needs to the full.

All enterprises, irrespective of the nature of their activity, must be involved in the provision of paid consumer services. Greater attention must be paid to organizing new kinds of services, making use of cultural establishments, sports complexes and centers, hobby associations, and special interest clubs.

Greater powers have been granted to local soviets, which have been given the right to involve in this important work, on a planned basis, all enterprises and organizations located on their territory. However, the restructuring of work in this area by local organs in Volgograd Oblast is being carried out too slowly.

Only half of the enterprises have reception points, workshops, or repair shops on their territory, wh ich deprives collectives of the opportunity to obtain services at their place of work.

It is planned to create around 40 public catering and consumer services cooperatives as part of the general package of measures to restructure management methods in Volgograd Oblast. The task is on the one hand to prevent the work being undermined by unsystematic campaigns and on the other not to hold back the work by artificial barriers or petty regulation.

The solution of the large-scale tasks set by the party, the CPSU Central Committee Politburo member continued, is inextricably bound up with the democratization of all aspects of our life. Restructuring will merely mark time if the broad masses of the people are not thoroughly involved in it. It is essential to increase people's activeness and place everything under the people's control if restructuring is to become irreversible and the mistakes of the past are not to be repeated.

A nationwide discussion of the Draft Law on State Enterprises (Associations) is now beginning throughout the country. This document forms the basis and core of the new management mechanism in the economy. It is also important now, during the period of discussion of the draft law, to apply and boldly develop its basic, fundamental provisions and make use of the burgeoning new approaches as we actually make our way forward.

The speech focused attention on the need to substantially step up party leadership in all spheres and to pursue a correct cadre policy. The Volgograd party obkom is carrying out quite a lot of work in this area. However, we can say today with complete certainty that the plenum directive on the need to remove negative phenomena among cadres and prevent cases of invalid, hasty replacement of them does apply either wholly or in part to the situation of cadres at enterprises in the light industry sector, trade, and services sphere in Volgograd Oblast.

After all, in this domain cadres, it can be said without any exaggeration, resolve everything. The most important factor -- people's everyday mood, their general state of social well-being, as it were -- depends on cadres' competence, sense of duty, and the demands they make on themselves, the attention they pay to others, and, finally, their honesty.

After describing the present-day international situation and the new peace initiatives put forward by our country, the speaker said: Your hero-city was reconstructed from the ashes and ruins left here 40 years ago. In the consciousness of Soviet people and the grateful memory of other peoples our victory here mark more than just a turning point in World War II: At that time, on the banks of the Volga, a powerful blow was struck against the very ideology of militarism and the cult of force and armed plunder. This lesson of history will remain lodged forever in mankind's memory.

Today the people of Volgograd, like all Soviet people, know that every one of our labor victories and every success in restructuring and democratizing social life makes a contribution to strengthening our country's security and a contribution to changes for the better in the international arena.

G.A. Aliyev expressed his certainty that the people of Volgograd will make every effort to greet the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in worthy fashion and achieve the high targets set by the 27th CPSU Congress and the Central Committee's January Plenum.

Speakers at the meeting talked in a committed and concerned way about the reserves for increasing the efficiency of social production and improving the economic mechanism and sharply criticized shortcomings acting as a brake on restructuring and preventing the implementation of the party social program as soon as possible. The speakers voiced the resolve of the people of Volgograd to answer the appeal of the CPSU Central Committee and Soviet Government by new successes in the struggle to speed up the country's socioeconomic development.

SHCHERBITSKIY ATTENDS WOMEN'S DAY IN KIEV

AU130922 Kiev PRAVDA UKRAINY in Russian 8 Mar 87 p 1

[RATAU report: "A Holiday of the Fatherland's Daughters -- A Solemn Meeting Dedicated to the International Women's Day, 8 March, in Kiev"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] A solemn meeting of representatives of Kiev working people and of the troops of Kiev garrison was held in the October Palace of Culture on 7 March to commemorate the International Women's Day.

The meeting was presided over by V.V. Shcherbitskiy, CPSU Central Committee Politburo member and Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary; Yu.N. Yelchenko, Ye.V. Kachalovskiy, B.V. Kachura, A.P. Lyashko, I.A. Mozgovoy, V.A. Sologub, A.A. Titarenko, V.S. Shevchenko, V.I. Ivashko, Yu.A. Kolomiyets, V.D. Kryuchkov, V.A. Masol, and Ya.P. Pogrebnyak, Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee Politburo members and candiate members; M.A. Orlik, Ukrainian Council of Ministers deputy chairman; front-ranking enterprise women workers; representatives of party, administrative, trade union, and Komsomol organizations; figures of science, culture, education, and health service; war and labor veterans.

The solemn meeting was opened by S.V. Voloshina, Kiev Gorkom secretary. [passage omitted]

The soiree ended with a festive concert.

SHCHERBITSKIY INSPECTS AUTOMATICS PLANT IN KIEV

AU191505 Kiev PRAVDA UKRAINY in Russian 15 Mar 87 pp 1-2

[RATAU report: "Let Us Be More Energetic in Restructuring Work and More Persistent in Accomplishing Social Tasks"]

[Text] The relay and automatics production association in Kiev is the republic's leading enterprise in the production of low-voltage equipment and automated control systems. On 13 March V.V. Shcherbitskiy, CPSU Central Committee Politburo member and Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary, visited its main plant. He familiarized himself with production, with the progress made in its renewal, and with new production items. In the instrument and assembly shops, the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary inspected the sector equipped with computer-controlled automatic machine tools, a line for the production of parts for electronic equipment, and modern devices for the control of the quality of goods. In conversations with the enterprise's specialists and workers, he inquired about the automation of production operations, schedules for introducing scientific and technological innovations, and the development of the plant's testing and experimental base. The need was noted to further step up the production of goods which are particularly needed in the national economy. It was emphasized that the utmost had to be done so that articles made by the enterprise are up to the world standards and are remarkable for their reliability.

The performance of a computerized tomograph, apparatus for the accurate diagnosis of illnesses developed by the plant's designers in cooperation with learned physicians, was demonstrated in a sector. V.V. Shcherbitskiy noted the expediency of providing medical institutions with such equipment and the urgency of training specialists to operate it.

During the inspection of consumer goods made by the association, attention was called to the need to step up their production and to adequately saturate the market in Kiev and other Soviet cities with them.

During the inspection of a plant dining room, questions concerning the organization of the working people's catering and the development of the advanced forms of trade and consumer services for the workers were discussed.

Tasks for restructuring party and economic work were discussed in a conversation held in the plant's party committee quarters. It was noted that the party committee had to be more persistent in improving the methods of control over party organizations, more resolute in getting rid of formalism, in encouraging criticism and self-criticism, in expanding openness, and in deepening democratic principles in the settlement of cadre problems. More daring is needed in putting into effect the economic levers of production intensification, and in adopting advanced forms of the organization of labor and wages.

A meeting of the enterprise's party and economic aktivists was held.

The meeting participants were addressed by V.V. Shcherbitskiy. He pointed out: The second year of the 5-year period actually began with the CPSU Central Committee January Plenum which determined what has to be done and how to speed up the movement. Each day brings new proof that gradual changes for the better have become a reality in our lives. As a lasting and complex process, restructuring has become irreversible and has met with the warm support of the people. What matters most now is to work creatively, boldly, and enterprisingly, to eliminate shortcomings, and to enhance everything that is new and advanced. It was emphasized that, under the conditions of democratizing the entire life, the role of criticism and self-criticism had increased. This policy is valid not for one single day, it is not a campaign, but a vital necessity for our society.

Having analyzed, from the positions of the requirements of the January 1987 CPSU Central Committee Plenum, what has been done, the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary noted that, in 1986, the republic reached, and in a number of indexes exceeded, the rates of growth targeted for the 5-year period. However, national economic branches have thus far made use of reserves which were lying on the surface. Under the conditions of the hard winter, errors and omissions in organizational and economic activity, complacency, inefficiency, and shortcomings in planning resulted in considerable economic losses. We have a highly important obligation to compensate for the arrears that have incurred.

A number of complex tasks, V.V. Shcherbitskiy said, have been set for our republic. The first of them is to reconstruct, with an eye on the future, the leading national economic branches. As is known -- and this is point two -- the target has been set to provide each family with an individual dwelling by the year 2000. People need dwellings now. The plan for house commissioning is being overfulfilled. Nonetheless, it is essential to build more rapidly, and this purpose to make use of every possibility -- direct labor methods and the principle of cooperation. The third problem is to increase overall grain yields. It is also very topical to improve the quality of consumer goods. To successfully cope with the plans, it is essential to hasten restructuring, to skillfully maneuver material and financial resources, to strengthen ties between science and production, and to accomplish tasks in a comprehensive manner.

The speaker highly assessed the efforts of the plant and association laborers to supply the national economy with products it needs so much, to raise labor productivity, and to produce consumer goods. At the same time he called attention to the fact that the main index -- the plan for selling products in conformity with delivery contracts -- has not been ensured.

V.V. Shcherbitskiy set a number of pressing tasks for the association collective and the plant's party organization. The most important of them is: to modernize production.

LIGACHEV ADDRESSES RAILWAY CONFERENCE

LD212035 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1530 GMT 21 Mar 87

[Text] Forty-three million tonnes! This is the amount by which the country's railways have fallen behind as regards the transportation of freight in the national economy over the past 2 months and 20 days of this year. This situation was analyzed today at the all-union conference by telephone which was held in the studio of the USSR Ministry of Railways. Yegor Kuzmich Ligachev, member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, took part in these up-to-the-minute executive proceedings.

This is what he said as he addressed the railway workers, the leaders of ministries, party, local soviet officials, and workers of the national economy who were present at this analysis:

[Begin Ligachev recording] The question arises: What is the reason for this state of affairs? How can we find a way out of it? Let us put it bluntly. The reason is to be found above all in major shortcomings in the organization of the supervision of train movements. Please note that, as before, there is a large accumulation of rolling-stock on the railway lines of the western and central parts of the country, while in the east there is a shortage. Our major reserve, comrades, is the speeding up of the turnover freight cars, an increase in the speed of train movements, a reduction of the time consumed by loading and unloading and an increase in the dead load per car. This is the only way we can make up for losses and ensure the transportation of freight in the national economy to the set deadlines.

In the meantime, more and more freight cars remain unloaded at the enterprises of the State Agro-Industrial Complex, and this is taking place month after month, year after year. The ministries of ferrous metallurgy, of the construction materials industry of grain products, of forestry, and of the chemical industry face the same situation. Many cars remain unloaded in Moscow, Vologda, Zaporozhye, Donetsk, Irkutsk, Kuybyshev, Perm, Rostov, Sverdlovsk, Tyumen, Tula, and Chelyabinsk Oblasts. These very ministries and these very oblasts are holding back the unloading of an enormous number of freight cars. This, of course, reduces the turnover of cars and reduces our possibilities in transporting freight.

In a number of places the volume of freight car repair work has increased thanks to the efforts of local enterprises. This is very good. Our comrades report that this is actively taken up in Kemerovo, Kustanay, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Pavlodar, and Chelyabinsk Oblasts as well as in Krasnodar and Stavropol Krays. I will say it again: This is very good.

At the same time the party committees of other oblasts do little to involve local enterprises in rolling-stock repair work. This above all relates to Novosobirsk, Semipalatinsk, and Chita Oblasts.

Major enterprises such as Yenakiyevo metallurgical works, Olenegorsk mine and concentration combine, Pechora GRES, and (Yasinovataya) by-product coke industry works, let us say it bluntly, while having a powerful production foundation, evade, under various pretexts, evade the repair of freight cars by their own efforts.

Moreover, every day, I repeat, every day, about 40,000 defective calls are still transferred between lines as before.

We are just shoving them around the country, do you understand? The question in general arises of discipline in implementing the measures you and I are trying to agree. I would ask the party committees to keep this matter under their supervision -- it is a requirement of the Central Committee and it must be carried out. We should not be sending cars thousands of kilometers to the ministry of railways' repair plants for the most simple and elementary repairs.

There are a good many other questions which have not been tackled for a long time. You are aware that this winter indicated the particular urgency of the country's shortage of snow clearance equipment. The drifts really were unprecedented and especially so in the Ukraine. The available stock of snow clearance equipment has to a considerable extent become obsolete. It appears that the country has one factory producing this equipment. It is in Engels in the Saratov Oblast and it is quite simply incapable both in terms of capacity and in terms of technical standard of satisfying transport demand before the end of this century. Such a situation cannot be tolerated. The Ministry of Transport Machine Building is aware of this, as is the Ministry of Railways and the USSR Gosplan, but the situation is not changing for the better. So what does happen? Every year, hundreds of thousands of people spend their time clearing railway tracks of snow in the winter. There are losses of hundreds of millions of rubles. What is the moral damage? We now want -- and we are already prepared for this -- to conduct a thorough examination of this question in the party's Central Committee and in the coming 5-7 years, to, as they say, clear up this question so there is no need to call out thousands and hundreds of thousands of people but to ensure that the railways are cleared of snow by thousands of machines.

I'd like to say a few words on the social aspect of railway workers' lives. It is well known that in railway transportation there are hundreds of thousands of families who need improvements in their housing conditions. The urgent need to seek additional means and efforts for building houses and social amenities for railway workers has come to a head. I was convinced of this when I was in Saratov. But, note that 2 months have passed and a mere 3 percent of the year's volume of housing and less than 1 percent of establishments for children have been commissioned on the lines and enterprises of the Ministry of Railways. We are not carrying as much freight as we whould, nor are we getting on with the social sphere. Not a single square meter of housing has been commissioned on the Baltic, Belorussian -- Comrade Andreyev -- Moldavian -- Comrade Gerasimov -- Odessa, or Kuybyshev lines.

I should also like to note that local Soviet bodies too sometimes take an indifferent attitude to the construction of housing and social amenities for railway workers, regarding such construction as a matter for ministerial departments. We have to put an end to attitudes of that sort. Let me repeat that whether it be at republic, kray or oblast level total responsibility for the social sphere is borne by local party and Soviet bodies.

Finally I would like to make the following point. In this complicated atmosphere affecting transport the decisive words should come from party committees and primary party organizations. I would now like to mention a few examples of good work. Take the town of Alapayevsk in Sverdlovsk Oblast. We have been told that on the initiative of the Gorkom a great deal of work is being done with labor collectives. Just look, an agreement has been concluded for cooperation between the Alapayevsk metallurgical works and the railway station. Comprehensive multishift arrangements have been set up encompassing the station workers and those of the enterprise's transport section, so that they have common target indicators and share a common responsibility for the usage of freight cars.

There is also a comprehensive system of labor incentives in force, as a result of which -- according to reports -- the entire transport operation is working without a hitch. Freight car turn-around time for loading and other technical operations, both at the station and at the works, is constantly 8 percent below the establishd figure. There is much to be learned from the work of the gorkom and raykom and primary organizations in Lipetsk. As a result of measures adopted, freight car turn-around time in the town enterprises' and organizations' sidings has been reduced in the first 2 and 1/2 months of the year by almost 30 minutes on the established figures, while the figure for Lipetsk metallurgical combine is over an hour. There are quite few examples of that sort, but unfortunately that is not what counts. From now on the flow of freight is going to increase day by day, and there will be an increase in the circulation of goods around the country. Moreover, summer is not far off, a time of greater passenger traffic. On top of all that several parts of the country are threatened with unprecedentedly fierce spring thaws. For these reasons the situation in the transport field requires further additional efforts by both central and local bodies; attention will have to be focused on transport by party committees, local soviet bodies, trade union and Komsomol organizations, people's control committees, and newspapers, radio and television. Railway enterprises will have to become truly the center of attention for local bodies and monitoring of their activities tightened up, and -- and this needs to be particularly underlined -- they need to be accorded, not just on paper but in reality, all the necessary rights and full autonomy of action for dealing with economic and social tasks. I think you will agree that only this approach, only this way of tackling matters -- matters of real importance, morevover -- will enable us to break out of the disruption now afflicting the country's rail transportation. [end recording]

WESTERN MEDIA REPORT RELEASE OF DISSIDENTS

Khodorovich Returns to Moscow

AU181630 Paris AFP in English 1623 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow, March 18 (AFP) -- Soviet dissident Sergey Khodorovich stepped back to freedom Wednesday ending five years of internment in Sibera.

With cropped hair and dressed in blue overalls, Mr. Khodorovich was met at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport by a small group of friends and relatives, including his wife Tatyana and their 14-year-old son, Igor.

Mr. Khodorovich, 47, told Western reporters that Soviet authorities set him free on the condition he emigrated, but he refused to say where he would make his new home. He said he was well an in good health.

His release, following a decree by the Supreme Soviet, or parliament, came Tuesday and was announced to Western journalists in Moscow by Yelena Bonner, the wife of Nobel Peace laureate Andrey Sakharov.

A former manager of the Solzhenitsyn Fund, an organisation providing assistance to political prisoners in the Soviet Union, Mr. Khodorovich was arrested by Soviet authorities in 1983 and sentenced to three years in a labor camp for "anti-Soviet propaganda".

Later his sentence was extended for another three years.

Bonner Announces Other Releases

AU191738 Paris AFP in English 1716 GMT 19 Mar 87

[Text] Moscow, March 19 (AFP) -- Three Georgian dissidents were freed Thursday, a dissident source said here.

They were named an Emanuil Tvaladze, sentenced last June to five years' imprisonment and three years' internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda;" Taryel Gvinyashvily, sentenced in 1983 to four years' imprisonment for setting up, with two other dissidents, an underground organisation for "the liberation of Georgia"; and Irakli Tseretely, of whom there were no immediate details.

Their release was announced earlier by Yelena Bonner, wife of academician Andrey Sakharov, who said however, she was unable to give their names. She also announced the release of dissident Valeriy Senderov, jailed for seven years in 1983 for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

Mr Senderov, a 41-year-old mathematician and member of the underground trade union SMOT (Free Interprofessional Association of Workers), was sentenced to seven years in a labour camp and five years on internal exile.

According to Mr Sakharov, 91 dissidents have now been freed since February. The Soviet authorities have said 150 detainees were being released before the end of their sentences and the cases of 150 others were being considered.

Military Abuse Reported

AU181337 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 13 Mar 87 p 2

[Excerpt] Vienna -- [Passage omitted] According to information from Vienna human rights circles, Lev Kritishevskiy and Dmitriy Argunov, both members of the Soviet group "For Trust Between West and East," were brought against their will to a Moscow military commissariat and forced to take the oath of allegiance of the Red Army. Furthermore, the two convinced pacifists were ordered to distance themselves from their group. Kritishevskiy, whose right eye is almost blind, had previously been twice declared unfit for military service. Soldiers in a Moscow barracks physically abused him twice in such a way that he had to be put into the military hospital.

NOVOSTI CITED ON JEWISH EMIGRATION FIGURES

LD210215 Moscow in English to North America 2300 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Figures supplied by the Soviet visa-issuing authority show that only 10,000 Soviet Jews had applied to leave by the start of this year. This was reported by the NOVOSTI press agency. It further stated that a figure of 400,000 for the number of Jews who want to emigrate, which is commonly cited in Israel and some Western countries, is not real. It is derived from the number of invitations that are regularly sent to Soviet Jews from nonexistent relatives in Israel. The NOVOSTI press agency said that about 300,000 Soviet Jews, or the overwhelming majority of those who want to leave, have already gone to the West in the last 40 years.

DISSIDENTS' SUPPORT FOR GORBACHEV REFORMS NOTED

AU121339 Paris AFP in English 1313 GMT 12 Mar 87

[Text] Paris, March 12 (AFP) -- Imprisoned Soviet archivist, Aleksandr Bogoslavskiy, has declared his support for the policies of Mikhail Gorbachev, according to sources close to humanitarian organisations in Paris.

The 50 year old dissident, jailed for three years in 1984 for possessing "anti-Soviet propaganda", has also requested his release, but this has not been granted. "I salute the policy of the democratization of Soviet society, and wish to contribute," he wrote last December to the management of the camp where he is serving his sentence. "Please release me and authorize my return to Moscow."

Mr. Bogoslavskiy was condemned after allegedly anti-Soviet manuscripts, including a copy of "Voyage in Russia," written in 1839 by the Marquis de Custine, were found at his home.

Dissident sources in Moscow claim the archivist was convicted on evidence from his uncle, a former officer for the Interior Ministry, who was himself threatened with imprisonment if he refused to act as witness.

Meantime, in Colgone, West Germany, another Soviet dissident has also publicly supported Mr. Gorbachev.

Exiled writer Lev Kopelev, 74, in an interview with the West German news agency DPA Thursday said the West must support the reforms of the Soviet leader because his desire for democratization is "credible."

Mr. Kopelev, who has spent almost 10 years of his life in Soviet camps or prisons and been stripped of his Soviet nationality, believes the main obstacle to Mr. Gorbachev's reforms is "the passive resistance of millions of citizens who have had their hopes dashed since 1917."

RULES FOR ENTRY-EXIT FOR 'PERSONAL REASONS'

PM171641 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 9, 1 Mar 87 Supplement p 7

["Document" reprinted from CHELOVEK I ZAKON under the rubric "Soviet Press Review: The Soviet People's Thoughts, Affairs and Concerns": "On Entering and Leaving the USSR for Personal Reasons"]

[Text] MOSCOW NEWS No 4 (p 8) wrote about certain changes in the rules for entering and leaving the USSR, which came into force on January 1, 1987. The changes are as follows.

The Resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers No 1064 of August 28, 1986, introduced a new section, "On examining the applications for entering and leaving the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for personal reasons", to the official Regulations adopted in 1970. The full text of the new section is given below.

- Soviet citizens, aliens, and persons without citizenship are allowed to enter and leave the USSR irrespective of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language and religion.

- Applications for entering and leaving the USSR for personal reasons (to reunite with members of one's family, visit close relatives, get married, see seriously ill relatives, pay homage to the graves of close relatives, settle inheritance problems, and other valid reasons) shall be handed to the diplomatic missions or consular offices of the USSR, or to the USSR internal affairs agencies in the place of residence of a citizen or a person without citizenship.

The procedure for applying for and registering entrance to and exit from the USSR for personal reasons is stipulated by the present regulations, other legislative acts of the USSR, the instructions published in accordance with them by the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. Marriage-related questions are also regulated by the instructions of the USSR Ministry of Justice on the procedure for registering in the USSR marriages between Soviet citizens and aliens or persons without citizenship.

- Applications to invite to the USSR citizens residing abroad, and to leave this country for personal reasons can be submitted by persons over 18 years of age.

Underage children can go abroad only through the intercession of their legal representatives and, as a rule, accompanied by them.

For children between 14 and 18 years of age, exit from the USSR for permanent residence abroad can only be affected [as published] if their consent is stated in writing and witnessed by the notary.

- The application for temporary exit from the USSR for personal reasons will be considered upon submission of appropriate documents.

The period of temporary stay for personal reasons in the USSR or abroad will be fixed according to the purpose of the trip. That period can be extended either by the USSR internal affairs agencies or the USSR diplomatic missions and consular offices, subject to approval by the host country's authorities.

- The application for exit from the USSR to reunite with members of one's family will be considered upon submitting the invitation issued by one's husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister, and witnessed by the notary, issued by the members of the family left behind (in case there are children underage by their common marriage); to the effect that the leaving party has no unfulfilled obligations to them under the USSR legislation.

Through the intercession of the leaving party, the question may be considered of simultaneous exit from the USSR of his or her other relatives and disabled dependents, in case they live and keep house together.

If the person applying for exit has no family in the USSR, the application may be considered upon submitting the invitation of a relative other than those mentioned above.

-- Exit from the USSR for personal reasons is not permitted to citizens of the USSR:

a) if one has had access to state secrets or if there exists other reasons involving national security -- until the circumstances preventing exit lose their validity;

b) if one's exit entails infringement on the vital rights and lawful interests of the citizens of the USSR;

c) if one has unfulfilled obligations to the state, or property-related duties involving the material or legal interests of state-owned, cooperative or other non-governmental organizations -- until these obligations and ditues are fulfilled;

d) if there are legal grounds for instituting criminal proceedings against the person -- until the proceedings are over;

e) if one is convicted for crime -- until the term of sentence is over, or one is exempt from punishment;

f) if it has been confirmed that the person issuing the invitation is residing abroad in violation of the procedure for exit from the USSR or for staying abroad -- until such circumstances are settled.

Exit from the USSR for personal reasons may be forbidden:

a) in the interests of securing public order, health morals of the population -- until the circumstances preventing exit lose their validity;

b) if, during one's previous sojour abroad, actions were committed infringing on the interests of the state, or if facts confirmed his or her violation of customs regulations or currency legislation;

c) if one submitted false personal data when applying for exit.

-- Entrance to the USSR by the Soviet citizen permanently residing abroad may be suspended temporarily in exceptional cases only when this is vital for national security reasons, for securing public order, health and morals of the population, for the protection of rights and lawful interests of Soviet citizens and other persons.

-- Aliens and persons without citizenship may be denied entry to and exit from the USSR on the grounds stipulated by Articles 24 and 25 of the USSR Law "On the Legal Status of Aliens in the USSR."

-- The application for temporary entry to and exit from the USSR for personal reasons will be considered within the shortest time possible: as a rule, within no more than a month. If the trip is connected with the serious illness or death of a relative, it will be considered within three days.

The applicant will be informed of the results of the consideration of his application, as well as of the motives for declining it (as the case may be).

Permission for entering or leaving the USSR is valid for six months.

- In case the application for entry to or exit from the USSR for personal reasons is declined, repeated applications will not be considered, as a rule, before six months after the initial refusal. In such a case, all or some of the papers submitted previously may be considered, provided no changes have taken place which can bear materially on the results of the consideration.

The question of entry to and exit from the USSR for personal reasons may also be regulated by bilateral agreements betwen the USSR and other countries.

PRIVATE HOUSING ABUSE BRINGS COURT PROCEEDINGS

Turkmenia Officials on Trial

LD181535 Moscow World Service in English 1500 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Court proceedings have been started in the Soviet Asian Republic of Turkmenia to evict a number of officials from homes they received in circumvention of the housing code. This has been reported by a Radio Moscow correspondent in the republic. Such homes were built on money from the republican budget, while spending on mass-scale housing construction was reduced. Violations of the social justice principles have been uncovered in two big cities in Turkmenia, Ashkhabad, and Tashauz. The authorities intend to give those homes to hospitals and child care centers.

IZVESTIYA on Issue

PM200915 [Editorial Report] Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 March 1987 Morning Edition carries on page 6 under the headline "Residence on the Lane" a 2,200-word own correspondent V. Kuleshov report on the "personal residences" built by Turkmen leaders. Kuleshov states that the reason there are no funds available to be spent on kindergartens and creches in the republic us that leaders use them to build themselves private residences. "Who lives in them?" he asks. "Mainly former oblast leaders." He recounts how Turkmen Communist Party Secretary Mollayeva carpeted a local newspaper editor for publishing a poem attacking such privileges. Her argument was that the editor was "indiscreet," but Kaleshov notes, the Turkmen Supreme Court recently sentenced Khalov, former first secretary of Ilyalinskiy Party raykom to 15 years imprisonment for bribery and embezzlement just 2 years after the Tashauz Obkum had described his "shortcomings" as merely an "indiscretion." Khalov's defense was that he was no worse than anyone else. "Who," he asked, "now lives in the residence of our former Oblispolkom Chairman Bally Yazkuliyev? Might it be his relatives?" Kuleshov cites other instances of leaders allocating their relatives "spacious" apartments and houses, noting that "in general any leader will invariably have his own residence." He concludes by stating that "in a quiet lane you will sometimes come across a spacious fortresslike house behind a high brick wall and you immediately understand that leaders live there. The same leaders who never stop talking from lofty rostrums about honesty, civic conscience, justice, and the lack of other moral qualities. But where, one wonders, will those qualities come from if these 'champions of justice' are themselves the first to break the law -- above all moral law, the law of human conscience."

Kazakh Residences Confiscated

PM191111 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Mar 87 Morning Edition p 3

[Own correspondent E. Matskevich report "Once More About 'Undercover' Private Residences"]

[Text] Kazakh SSR -- The Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium has summed up the results of the handing over for public use of "small" hotels, country residences, and hunting lodges.

IZVESTIYA carried articles on this subject more than once ("Keeping Aloof" edition No 200, 1985; "Outward Appearance" edition No 26, 1986; "They Will Make Good Kindergartens" edition No 45, 1987). Readers would nonetheless like to know how the handover of all these well-furnished, and as a rule unoccupied premises went, whose need was greatest.

Over the past decade the republic's oblispolkoms alone spent around R8 million on the construction of various kinds of "small" hotels for a narrow circle of leading personnel. These comfortable "log cabins" sprung up like mushrooms after rain. Over the past 4 years alone R700,000 was generously allocated for this purpose in Petropavlovsk, R600,000 In Kustanay, R500,000 in Karaganda, and only a little less in Pavlodar, Dzhezkazgan, Guryev, and Kzyl-Orda.

Frequently buildings built for housing purposes were taken over and transformed into this type of "undercover" hotel. For instance, in 1979 the republic Ministry of Highways built a so-called hostel for road workers. On the instructions of the Dzhambul Oblispolkom it was immediately transferred to the books of the city housing and municipal services department, where it featured as a branch of the city's Taraz Hotel. The construction of this 10-room hotel cost the state R350,000.

Some oblasts seemed to be vying in their endeavor to please high-ranking guests. This was the case also in Kzyl-Orda but it took place on a large scale. The hostel built by Glavrissovkhozstroy, allegedly for its workers, cost R500,000. However, none of the workers ever stayed in the stylish 5-room hotel with a sauna and a hot house.

Residential houses and hostels were illegally converted into "small hotels." A number of ministries, departments, associations, and enterprises set aside and equipped guest apartments. At the same time the shortfall in housing construction in Kazakhstan totaled 1,700,000 square meters during the last 5-year plan.

At the 16th Kazakh Communist Party Congress, which took place under the old leadership, the question of the confiscation of these residences was raised as an acute issue. Subsequently the appropriate decisions were adopted. But no one was in any hurry to implement them.

In view of this "sluggishness," it was firmly stated at the 13 January Presidium meeting which was attended by republic leaders and oblispolkom chairmen that these crude violations of the law must be rectified by 1 March.

Who took over the stylish residences in Dzhambul and Kzyl-Orda? The 3-story building of the branch of the Taraz Hotel now houses the cardio-rheumatological department of the city's pediatric hospital with 70 beds.

The country residences of the Glavrissovkhozstroy in Kzyl-Orda were handed over to the Aray pioneer camp together with the furniture and fittings.

All the buildings and installations in the Turgay Oblispolkom leisure zone, the country residences of the Tselinograd Oblispolkom, the Zyryanovsk lead combine in East Kazakhstan Oblast, and the Kazakh Ministry of Motor Transport in the Borovskaya leisure zone in Kokchetav Oblast, and so forth, have been converted into clinics for working people.

All this was announced at a recent session of the Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium by V. Grebenyuk, first deputy chairman of the republic Council of Ministers. The list, which covers some 20 pages of typescript, could be continued.

In Kazakhstan 247 "small" hotels, 84 country residences, 414 guest apartments, 22 hunting lodges, and 6 reserve apartments have been handed over for public use. Thanks to this 350 hospital beds, health centers catering for 500 people, 160 places in children's sanatoria, 285 places in public health clinics, and almost 2,000 places in pioneer camps have been provided. 1,500 citizens will be allocated places in hospitals; 1,500 additional hotel beds for general use will be provided; 365 families with many children, disabled people, and Great Patriotic War participants have been allocated apartments.

As is known, profound transformations, among other spheres in cadre policy, are taking place in Kazakhstan. Many officials who proved unworthy or guilty of various abuses, including manipulation with prestigious residences, have been punished. Some have been removed from their jobs or expelled from the party. The return to public use of private residences used by a narrow circle of select people is a normal phenomenon of the exercise of social justice.

GEORGIAN AKTIV DISCUSSES FRAUDULENT PRACTICES

LD202352 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] The need to put an end to falsifying records and fraudulent accounting in capital construction was the subject discussed today in Tbilisi at a meeting of the party and economic aktiv of Georgia.

In a speech by Comrade Patiashvili, first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee, and in other speeches it was noted that in this sector an extremely unsatisfactory state had taken shape. The vicious practice of accepting as ready for operation uncompleted projects of social significance was widespread here. At the end of 1986 many residential houses, hospitals, and nurseries in Tbilisi, Jutaisi, Batumi, Sukhumi, Rustavi, and in other towns were ready according to the accounts but in reality they were far from it. Similar phenomena in conditions of restructuring discredits the efforts of the party in enhancing the welfare of the people.

Determining ways of putting an end to criminal transactions at the states' expense, the meeting stressed the importance of raising the role of responsibility of primary party organizations in this important matter. Work should be radically restructured in administrative organs for the prevention and exposing of crimes connected with falsifying records and fraudulent accounts. Specific measures were outlined for ensuring trustworthiness in stock-taking and bookkeeping, and strengthening exactingness from heads who permit distortions.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON ENTERPRISE DRAFT LAW

LD212318 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1015 GMT 21 Mar 87

["A Discussion of the USSR Draft Law on Enterprises"; a roundtable discussion from the studio of All-Union Radio in Moscow presented by Irina Starchekova, commentator, with Yuriy Mikhaylovich Cherkasov, director of the Moscow carburetor works, part of the ZIL production association; Vasiliy Valilyevich Kleptsov, head of the AUCCTU legal department; and Gennadiy Ivanovich Mineyev, department head of the USSR State Planning Committee]

[Excerpts] [Starchekova] The nationwide discussion of the draft law on state enterprises has become a major political event in the life of our society. [passage omitted]

The CPSU Central Committee appeal to the Soviet people contains a call to all of us to become involved with a feeling of responsibility for the future shape of the country. Responding wholeheartedly to this appeal, industrial and office workers are conducting a critical and businesslike discussion in meetings of labor collectives as they debate the draft law.

Yuriy Mikhaylovich, the same goes for your works as well, of course?

[Cherkasov] The draft law has been widely discussed at our works. The basic leit-motif undoubtedly receives support and approval. We have been waiting a long time for changes in economic activity. And if all the main orientations incorporated in the law are implemented in practice, then without doubt it will be possible to break down people's social passivity and substantially increase productions. [passage omitted] The new economic conditions that are being proposed in the draft law certainly do mobilize the people, but there is still here, in our view, a mass of shortcomings, and, during the discussion of the draft law in our collective, quite a few critical comments were also made, and changes were suggested.

[Starchevoka] It would be interesting to hear them.

[Cherkasov] The first thing to be said, and the thing that stands out, is the traditional pretentiousness [deklarativnost], shall we say, of certain articles that cloud the essence, and more or less prevents one from understanding. The main thing, I think, is that the law should be purged of these general, repetitive stipulations -- let's say, Article 1, Section 3, where it says: Consumer demand is binding on the enterprise. I emphasize once more that one cannot probably agree fully with this.

[Starchekova] Right.

[Cherkasov] The interests of the consumer and the interests of the enterprise must be equally satisfied. [passage omitted]

[Starchekova] But in that case, what concrete proposal would you forward regarding the formulation of that section?

[Cherkasov] I would suggest scrapping the phrase "consumer demand is binding on the enterprise"...

[Starchekova, interrupting] Right.

[Cherkasov] ... from that section of the law.

[Starchekova] Hmm. Clear enough. What other wishes have you got?

[Cherkasov] Article 4: the material and technical base and the means of the enterprise. In Section 2 -- here the work pattern of the enterprise is regulated: In order to achieve complete efficiency in its production potential, the enterprise establishes a two-shift pattern, but when unique, expensive equipment is involved, and wherever necessary through production conditions, it sets up a three- or four-shift pattern of work.

[Starchekova] So what do you propose?

[Cherkasov] I propose scrapping that item completely. Self-financing and the economic levers will force enterprises to make more intensive use of equipment.

[Starchekova] So you mean that it will sort itself out automatically.

[Cherkasov] Absolutely. It will automatically...

[Starchekova interrupting] Without needing the use of any legal procedure?

[Cherkasov] Absolutely true. If the capital output [fondootdacha] does not grow, then the enterprise cannot properly formulate its economic policy. It will simply remain without profits. [passage omitted]

[Kleptsov] During the discussion in the USSR Gosplan of this draft law with economc managers, one of them quite literally said this: How come there is such certainty that the ministry knows better than we do what categories of worker we need, and how many workers we need, in order for the enterprise to fulfill the plan successfully? I consider, this manager said, that an enterprise should have the right even to have a ballerina on its staff, if her activity promotes successful work. To rephrase what this manager said, he is advocating that an enterprise should independently determine the size of the workforce and its professional composition, that the enterprise itself should have the right to determine its staff. Article 14, it seems to me, gives quite a lot of independence to an enterprise in this respect. Although, probably, from the position of the director this article is not quite perfect.

[Cherkasov] But, in general, there is a certain contradiction in the article. The first part says that the director of the enterprise has the right to independently approve the structure of the enterprise and its staff, but later it says that the norm for that category of workers is approved by the director. How, then, can one independently approve the structure?

[Starchekova] Yes.

[Kleptsov] Well, I imagine that all that will be taken into account when the final version is produced. [passage omitted]

SHORTCOMINGS IN PREPARATIONS FOR FARM WORK

LD210104 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Text] Today in the USSR Gossnab, [State Committee for Material and Technical Supply] the meeting of the All-Union Operations Staff for Material and Technical Supplies to Agriculture is taking place. As you know, comrades, leaders of all ministries and departments which supply machines, spare parts, fuel and other materials for collective and state farms, permanently participate in its work.

Today the staff focused its attention on the preparations for spring sowing. It has been noted that an equal number of tractors have been overhauled all over the country this year, as were overhauled by this time last year. Among the powerful models such as the K-700, a few more have been overhauled. However, in Orel, Kursk, Astrakhan and Perm Oblasts there has been a considerable lagging behind. In the RSFSR generally, nearly 16,000 'Kirovets' need repair. In the Ukraine and in Kazakhstan the number is half that.

It is essential to speed up the repair of mowing machines. This especially applies to the kolkhozes and sovkhozes of Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Kazakhstan, and Moldavia, and also to the farms of the Volgograd, Perm and some other oblasts, krays, and RSFSR republics.

The pace of repair work on the combine harvesters is low in Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, and Turkmenia although harvesting will begin in those republics first. So far, only half of all harvesters has been overhauled. Throughout the country 73 percent of all harvesters are ready. This is over 800,000 combine harvesters.

The staff noted that the main reason of the shortcomings listed is the low level of organization of the repair work. Besides, a number of enterprises do not fulfill the plan for the supply of spare parts and new machines. Among those lagging behind were the Tashkent, Chelyabinsk, Pavlodar and Kharkov tractor factories and Tselinogradtelmash.

The Noginskiy fuel equipment and auto diesel factory is still lagging behind. The aero-industrial complex is very unhappy with the USSR Ministry of Ferrous Metallurgy, Ministry of Machine Tool Building, Chemical and Petroleum Machine Building, and some others.

There are still not enough freight cars to dispatch manufactured goods. The staff accepted operational measures regarding many questions.

MOSCOW CARRIES INTER-OBLAST AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM

LD201500 [Editorial Report] Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 0420 GMT on 20 March in its "Land and People" feature carried a 20-minute radio hookup program conducted by Natalya Vartanyan with Volgograd, Tselinograd, and Donetsk Oblasts on the subject of field work preparation and organization of the sowing campaign including machine repairs and seed selection. Last year 6,000 farms made losses, notes Vartanyan.

Volgograd -- Last year, Volgograd Oblast sold 300,000 metric tons of grain instead of a planned 3 million. This spring, a further 500,000 hectares from the winter crop area is to be added to the planned area. Efforts will be concentrated on those farms which are lagging behind. Cultivation is to be intensified in many areas. Collective contracting should also help. Some of these farms are having problems with financial autonomy; others are not taking first class seeds from state funds. The flood level is also expected to be 2 to 3 meters above average in some places, which will involve displacement of people and livestock; this has not been accounted for in the sowing plans. The Mikhaylovskiy rayon agro-industrial committee has been doing much pioneering work to reduce losses.

Tselinograd -- The farms that are behind are now becoming successful in increasing their yields. Specialist Nesmashnyy says that last year the oblast fulfilled its plans, the best results for a long time. This can be mainly attributed to the new economic methods.

Donetsk -- The unprecedented snow is causing problems in preparations for sowing, especially with machinery. Donetsk sells much grain but nevertheless has a shortfall of 1 million metric tons of grain incurred over the last 5-year plan. The total harvest expected for 1987 here is 2,217,000 metric tons of grain, the highest in years. Last fall's dry spell led to non-fulfillment of the plan for winter wheat sowing; only half the area was suitable for sowing. The oblast agro-industrial committee's strategy this year is to go for record harvests in all crops, e.g. 39 quintals per hectare for winter wheat. Barley is to yield 27 quintals per hectare. The area under barley is to increase twice compared to last year; the quantity of first class seeds being sown is 99 percent. The "October" farm of Marinskiy Rayon is a model to all other farms in the oblast, as Chervonenko testifies -- yields of 40-50 quintals per hectare are usual here.

In a general discussion, the various correspondents note variously the importance of leading farms as examples, timely operations and the need for independence and self-sufficiency in management.